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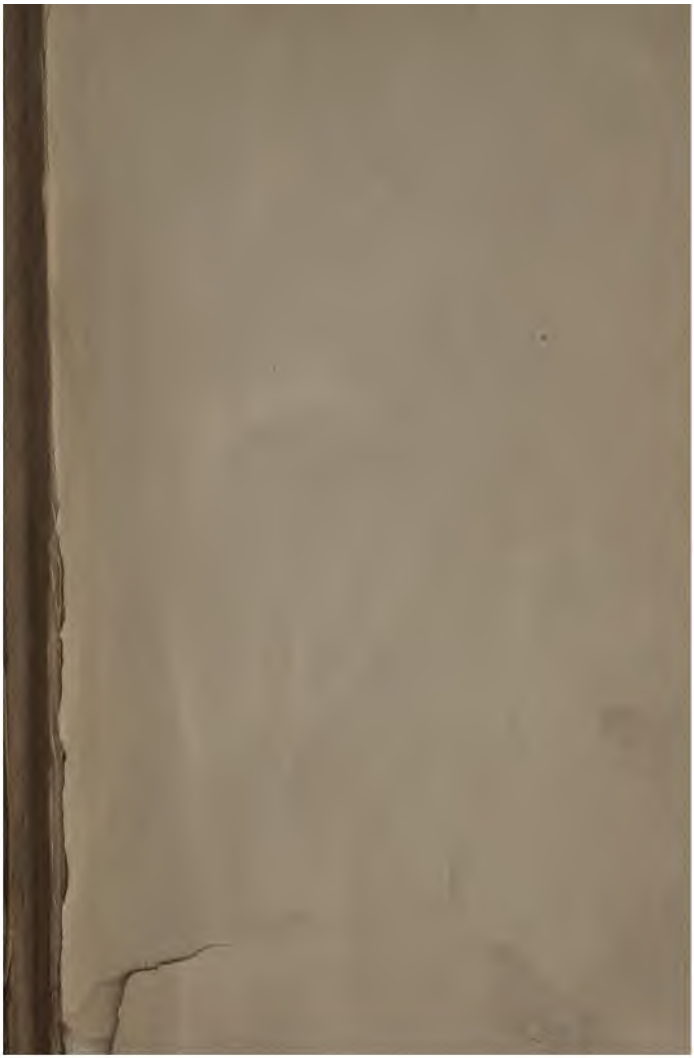

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Thomas Paine

THE WORKS OF THOMAS PAINE.

The World is my Country.
To do good my religion.

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THE

WORKS

OF

THOMAS PAINE,

A HERO IN THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION.

WITH

AN ACCOUNT OF HIS LIFE.

"The world is my country; to do good my religion."

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

COMPRISING

"LIFE OF THOMAS PAINE," "MISCELLANEOUS THEOLOGICAL WRITINGS," AND "LETTERS TO GEORGE WASHINGTON."

PHILADELPHIA:
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THE

LIFE

OF

THOMAS PAINE.

PREFACE.

THE Publisher deeming these memoirs incomplete and defective, from the omision of some important circumstances which would tend to illustrate yet more, he thinks, than we have hitherto done, the injustice and persecution Mr. PAINE experienced, not only from us as a people and nation, but from the British government, to whose arbitrary rule and maladministration he was obnoxious. We acknowledge many omissions, which if detailed and duly considered by our readers, would tend to exalt his character in no small measure, but in preparing the succeeding pages for publication, we did not contemplate more than supplying such materials as would compel the prejudiced and those who had thoughtlessly joined in the opposition he experienced when living, or who had subsequently assailed his reputation, to pause and consider whether they did so wisely and justly. We think we have supplied abundant materials for this purpose, sufficient, if they were duly considered, effectually to turn the tide of prejudice, and that henceforward the name of PAINE, which has been cast out as evil, will be regarded with especial reverence, and held in grateful remembrance: all we ask is an attentive perusal, and we think the dark cloud which has obscured his fair fame and memory will then have passed away for ever.

We have passingly noticed, although the publisher thinks not sufficiently, the prosecution which Mr. PAINE was exposed to from the British government, and the strenuous exertions made to suppress his writings. The history of all the various movements of hostility and petty malignity would be interesting, *but would* occupy too much space in detail. We can only *mention the first* demonstration or commencement of hostility

in a Royal Proclamation, dated May 19, 1792, by King George III. :—

"Whereas, divers wicked and seditious writings have been published, and industriously circulated, tending to excite tumult and disorder, and raise groundless jealousies and discontents in the minds of our faithful and loving subjects respecting the laws, civil and religious, established in this kingdom;" with very much more to the same effect. And then there are strict orders and command given "to all magistrates to discover and punish the authors and printers of such wicked and seditious writings, it being our determination to carry the laws vigorously into execution against such offenders as aforesaid." A prosecution was commenced against Paine himself, the printers, publishers, and even against all known buyers and possessors of his works; the writings were ignominiously and publicly burnt by the common hangman; and a series of persecution and prosecutions was directed against the writings of Paine, and the sellers of his works, his readers and admirers, which have been continued till within a very few years. It would be altogether beyond our power to detail all the vexatious prosecutions and sufferings of individuals as a consequence of these and similar enactments; if collected, they would fill a folio volume not inferior to Fox's Book of Martyrs, most of them sufferers in a purer and better cause, and of a higher, nobler, and more disinterested character than those described by that historian. Without, therefore, entering into further details, we submit what we have written to the magnanimity and sense of justice of the American people, with the full confidence of a satisfactory verdict and a triumphant acquittal of all the charges with which the malevolence and bigotry of the clergy and their adherents may have obscured his fair fame.

In conclusion, to the reader. Certain we are that when *opinions are free,* either in matters of government or religion *truth will finally* and powerfully prevail. T. I.

THE LIFE OF THOMAS PAINE.

PERHAPS there are few men who have rendered greater services to the cause of humanity in general, and our country in particular, who have been requited with more ingratitude, or have had more injustice done to their character and motives, than the subject of these few pages. That Mr. Paine should have, towards the close of his life, chosen the United States for his retreat, was perhaps very injudicious; he could not have gone, under the circumstances (just having published his Age of Reason), to a more unfavourable part of the world. A country like ours, at that period, and perhaps even now (although not to an equal extent as formerly), abounding in fanatics, was but little disposed to favour a man whose mind was bold, inquiring, liberal, free from prejudice, and who in principle was a Deist. Of all wrath, fanatical wrath is the most intense; nor can it be a matter of much surprise, if by many his eminent revolutionary services were forgotten, that great numbers, indeed all the religious community, afforded him but an ungracious reception, and that he was treated with neglect and illiberality. Now that almost half a century has elapsed since his decease, we may perhaps be better prepared to do justice to his character, especially as toleration, candour, and charity are more predominant than formerly, and the *nation has more* of reason, judgment, and good sense, we *hope, and less pious* enthusiasm, or fanaticism.

But however this may be, there were a chosen and enlightened few who, like himself, "bold enough to be honest, and honest enough to be bold," feeling his value, continued to be his sincerely attached friends to his last hour; from some of these, as well as from other sources, we have gleaned the following particulars:—

THOMAS PAINE was born at Thetford, county of Norfolk, England, Jan. 29th, 1737. His father, Joseph Paine, was a staymaker by trade, and a member of the society of Quakers. His parents were respectable, although not in circumstances to afford him a college education; all his learning, therefore, was obtained from a common English grammar school, where he acquired a slight knowledge of Latin, although it does not appear he ever was much of a proficient in the dead languages. He left school at thirteen years of age, or thereabouts, and during his studies he indicated no remarkable symptoms of that talent and genius which was to shine out so brightly in after life. After leaving school, he resided with his father, where he remained two or three years, then left his native town, and proceeded to London, with the hope of acquiring a knowledge of the world, that he might improve his circumstances, and employ whatever of talent he might possess, to the best advantage. After staying in London a short time, he went to Dover, but not succeeding in his business to his satisfaction, he went on board a privateer; but it is not known how long he remained at sea, or what induced him to quit the naval profession and resume his own business. When he was about twenty-two years of age, he settled at Sandwich, and there became acquainted with a young woman of the name of Mary Lambert, the daughter of an exciseman, whom he married. She died the next year, at Margate. After her death he moved to London, and thence to his native town, Thetford, where he obtained a place in the Excise, which he retained till 1774. In 1768, he re-

moved to Lewes, in Sussex, where he married a Miss Oliver, with whom he lived but a short time, when a separation took place, the real cause of which, although many have been assigned, as is usual in such cases, was never known to the public. He was much respected whilst at Lewes, and mixed freely in circles far above him in circumstances and social position, which can only be regarded as a just tribute due to his talents, conduct, and conversational powers. He was the author of several small pamphlets, and articles in the county newspaper, by which means, it is probable, he obtained some reputation, and was the cause of his obtaining an introduction to Dr. Franklin, then in London, who it appears soon discovered, in his interviews with Paine, that he was conversing with a man of no ordinary character, and which resulted in the Doctor furnishing him with a letter of introduction to one of his most intimate friends in the United States. Under Dr. Franklin's patronage and advice he sailed for America, and arrived in Philadelphia in 1775. The circumstances under which he arrived in our city, and the glorious results of his advice and counsel, have been so admirably and eloquently described by the late lamented G. Lippard, that we cannot do better than employ his very language, as conveying a better and more perfect idea of the invaluable services of Paine, in this peculiar juncture of our national affairs, than we could otherwise furnish or supply:—

"It was in the time when a band of rebels sat in Carpenter's Hall, when the smoke of Lexington and Bunker Hill was yet in the sky, and the undried blood of Warren, and all the martyrs, was yet upon the ground—it was in this time, in the blood-red dawn of our Revolution, that a scene of some interest took place in the city of William Penn. Look yonder, *and behold* that solitary lamp, flinging its dim light *through* the shadows of a neatly furnished room.

"*Grouped* around the table, the glow of the lamp po

full in their faces, are four persons—a Boston Lawy
Philadelphia Printer, a Philadelphia Doctor, and a Vi
Planter.

"Come with me into that lonely room. Let us seat
selves there. Let us look into the faces of these men—
man with the bold brow and resolute look, is one
Adams, from Boston; next to him sits the calm-faced R
min Rush; there you see the marked face of the printe
Benjamin Franklin; and last of all, your eye rests u
man distinguished above all others, by his height, the
outlines of his form, and the solemn dignity of his
That man is named Washington—one Mr. George Was
ton, from Mount Vernon.

"And these men are all members of the rebel Con
They have met here to talk over the affairs of their cou
Their conversation is deep-toned—cautious—hurried.
man seems afraid to give utterance to the thoughts o
bosom. Confiscation—the gibbet—the axe! These have
the reward of brave men before now, who dared to speak
son against his Majesty by the grace of God. Therefo
the conversation of the four patriots burthened with rest
and gloom. They talk of Bunker Hill, of Lexington, o
blood-thirsty British ministry, of the weak and mer
British king.

"Then, from the lips of Franklin, comes the great
tion—Where is this war to end? Are we fighting only
change in the British ministry? Or—or—for the independ
of our native land? There is silence in that room. W
ingtom, Adams, Rush, all look into each others' faces,
are silent. Bound to England by the ties of ancestry—
guage—religion—the very idea of separation from her s
a blasphemy.

"Yes, with their towns burnt, their people murder
Bunker Hill smoking there, Lexington bleeding yonder—

these colonists cling to the name of England, still shudder at the big word that chokes their utterance to speak—*Independence.*

"At this moment, while all is still, a visiter is announced. A man somewhat short in stature, clad in a coat of faded brown. He takes his seat at the table, is introduced to these gentlemen by Franklin, and then informed of the topic under discussion. Look at his brow, his flashing eye, as in earnest words he pours forth his soul. Washington, Adams, Rush, Franklin, all are hushed into silence. At first, the man in the brown coat startles, horrifies them with his political blasphemy. But as he goes on, as his broad solid brow warms with fire, as his eye flashes the full light of a soul roused into all its life, as those deep, earnest tones speak of the Independence of America—her glorious future—her people, that shall swell into countless millions—her navy, that shall whiten the uttermost sea—her destiny, that shall stride over the wrecks of thrones, to the universal empire of the Western Continent. Then behold—they rise round the table—they press that man in the brown coat by the hand—nay, the Virginia planter, Washington, grasps both his hands, and in a voice deepened by emotion, begs him, for the sake of God, to write these words in a book—a book that shall be read in all the houses, and thundered from all the pulpits in America.—Do you see the picture, my friends? That man in the brown coat, standing there, flushed, trembling with the excitement of his own thoughts—that splendidly formed Virginia planter on one side grasping him by the hand, those great-souled men encircling him on the other, John Adams, Benjamin Rush, Benjamin Franklin? Their gleaming eyes shine with one soul, and read on the great cloud of the future this one word—*Independence*

"Let this scene pass. Let us follow this man in the brown coat through the year 1775.

"*The day after* this scene, that modest Virginia planter

George Washington, was named commander-in-chief of the Continental army.

"And in the summer days of '75, that man in the brown coat was seen walking up and down, in front of the old State House. His great forehead shone in full sunlight, while, with his hand placed behind his back, he went slowly along the pavement. Then he would hurry to his lonely garret, seize the quill, and write down the deep thoughts of his brain.

"Then forth again for a walk in the old State-House Square —up and down, under these old trees, he wanders all the afternoon—at night, there is a light burning all night, till the break of day.

"Let us look into that garret window—what see you there? A rude and neglected room—a man short in stature sitting beside an old table, with scattered sheets of paper all about him—the light of the unsnuffed candle upon his brow—that unfailing quill in his hand!

"Ah! my friends, you may talk to me of the sublimity of your battles, whose poetry is bones and skulls, whose glori are like the trophies of the butcher's shambles—but for m there is no battle so awfully sublime as one like this now bein fought before your eyes.

"A poor, neglected author, sitting in his garret—the world poverty, time, space, all forgotten—as with his soul kindle into one steady blaze, he plies that fast-moving quill. Tha quill writes down words on paper, that which shall burn int the brains of kings, words like arrows, winged with fire an pointed with vitriol.

"Go on, brave author, sitting in your garret, alone at thi dread hour—go on—on, through the silent watches of th night, and God's blessings fall, like breezes of June, upo your damp brow. Go on, in the name of God and man, fo you are writing the thoughts of a nation into birth.

"For many days, in the year 1775, was that man in

the most important cause of the separation from the mother country. Thomas Jefferson, Joel Barlow, George Washington, unite in their praises of this work. Long after its publication, Jefferson sent a government ship to bring the author home from France; Washington invited him to the shelter of his own home; Barlow described him, yes, the man in the brown coat, as 'one of the most benevolent and disinterested of mankind; endowed with the clearest perception, an uncommon share of original genius, and the greatest breadth of thought.'

"In August, 1785, after the battle was fought, and the empire was established, Congress, in a solemn resolution, stamped the author of Common Sense with their approbation, as one of the greatest of the great men of the Revolution.

"This book was the cause and forerunner of the Declaration of Independence. In this book, for the first time, were written these great words: 'The Free and Independent States of America.'

"Let us follow this man in the brown coat through the scenes of the Revolution.

"In the full prime of early manhood, he joins the army of the Revolution; he shares the crust and the cold with Washington and his men—he is with those brave soldiers on the toilsome march, with them by the camp-fire, with them in the hour of battle. Why is he with them?

"Is the day dark—has the battle been bloody—do the American soldiers despair? Hark! that printing-press yonder, which moves with the American camp in all its wanderings, is scattering pamphlets through the ranks of the army,—pamphlets written by the author-soldier; written sometimes on the head of a drum—or by the midnight fire, or amid the corses of the dead. Pamphlets that stamp great hopes and greater truths, in plain words, upon the hearts of the Continental army. Tell me, was not that a sublime sight, to see a

man of genius who might have shone as an orator, a poet, a novelist, following, with untiring devotion, the bloody stamped footsteps of the Continental army?

"Yes, in the dark days of '76, when the soldiers of Washington tracked their footsteps on the soil of Trenton, in the snows of Princeton, there, first among the heroes and patriots, there, unflinching in the hour of defeat, writing the 'Crisis' by the light of the camp-fire, was the author-hero of the Revolution. Yes, we will look into the half-clad ranks of Washington's army, we will behold each corporal surrounded by a group of soldiers, as he reads aloud the pamphlets of the author-soldier. What hope, what joy, what energy, gleams over the veteran faces, as words like these break on the frosty air: 'These are the times that try men's souls. The summer soldier and the sunshine patriot will, in this crisis, shrink from the service of his country; but he that stands it now, deserves the love and thanks of men and women. Tyranny, like hell, is not easily conquered, yet we have this consolation with us, that the harder the conflict the more glorious the triumph.' Do not words like these stir up the blood?

"Yet can you imagine their effect when read to groups of starved and bleeding soldiers, by the red watch-fire, in the cold air of the winter dawn?

"Such words as these stirred up the starved Continentals to the attack on Trenton, and there, in the dawn of that glorious morning, George Washington, standing sword in hand over the dead body of the Hessian Rhal, confessed the magic influence of the author-hero's pen.

"The vilest enemy of the author-hero, a base hireling of the English court, yes, even he, blasphemer, libeller of Jefferson, and Franklin, and Madison, as he was, even he, a thing so small in soul that his very masters were ashamed of him, was forced to confess that 'the cannon of Washington was not

more formidable to the British, than the pen of the a
Common Sense.'

"Is there a heart that does not throb at the nam
author of the Declaration, Thomas Jefferson, the st
hero of the Revolution?

"And do your hearts throb at the mention of hi
and yet refuse to pay a tribute of one solitary puls
justice to the memory of his brother-patriot, his fo
in the work of freedom, the author-hero of the Rev
THOMAS PAINE?"

This elegant and eloquent tribute of respect to Pain
also contains so much historical and reliable informat
part of an address delivered on the occasion of the cel
of the birth-day of Thomas Paine, by the Society of
day Institute, in the city of Philadelphia. It needs no
for its insertion; it is worthy of preservation, and w
not but our readers will regard it with favour. We
resume the current of our biographical detail. We hav
passed over the most unimportant and uninteresting
of Paine's life—but having brought him to Americ
instance of Dr. Franklin, we will endeavour to furni
particulars of those great events which called his tale
activity, in which he took so prominent and decide
and on which his reputation both for good and evil, a
to the peculiar views of his friends or enemies, is pri
founded. He arrived here (Philadelphia) in 1774, a
Dr. Rush states it was in 1772; but he is undoubte
taken in his dates, as we have ample means of dete
The difficulties in which this country was involved wi
Britain had commenced, and Dr. Franklin was in Lond
the hopes of some amicable adjustment; but, as the
became more and more faint, and the signs of the

contest more evident and unmistakable, the Doctor very naturally, and with his usual sagacity, selected Paine as a man every way calculated to render important services to his country in the coming struggle. With a short letter of recommendation, therefore, he arrived in this country, where his first design appears to have been, according to Dr. Rush, to open a school for the instruction of young ladies in several branches of knowledge, which at that time were seldom taught in the schools of our country. Vale, in his Life of Paine, undoubtedly the best which has been written—and to which we stand indebted for much and valuable information—awards great credit to Franklin, in that he had the genius to discover Paine's peculiar tact and talent, and despatch him to this country without committing himself as to his real motives in so doing; and he also very justly remarks, "That this conduct of Franklin, in preferring Paine to himself for this important object, whilst it reflects the greatest credit upon Paine's natural abilities, acquisitions, and moral virtues, redounds also to Franklin's glory; it marks also the calumniators of Paine, those who have attempted to present him to the public as a demoralized, vulgar, and illiterate man, as base, unprincipled slanderers, whose calumnies are not the less venomous for proceeding from reverend persons."

Paine himself describes his arrival here, in the winter of 1774, a few months, as he says, before the battle of Lexington, which was fought in April, 1775. His first employment was with Mr. Aitken, a bookseller; and as editor of the Pennsylvania Magazine, his introduction to that work, dated Jan. 24, 1775, concludes thus: "Thus encompassed with difficulties, this first number of the Pennsylvania Magazine entreats a favourable reception, of which we shall only say, that like the early snowdrop, it comes forth in a barren season, and contents itself with foretelling the reader that choicer flowers are *preparing* to appear." "For this," Dr. Rush tells us, "h

received about one hundred and twenty-five dollars a year, and that the work was well sustained by Paine; that his Song on the Death of General Wolfe, and his Reflections on the Death of Lord Clive, gave it a sudden currency which few works of that kind have since had in our country."

Meantime Franklin had arrived, and his intercourse and conversation with Paine resulted in the offer to put into his hands materials for the history of the times, when Paine somewhat surprised the philosopher, by showing him his copy of Common Sense, and that he had anticipated his designs and wishes. We have examined, with some attention, the conflicting claims of many individuals as to who first broached the doctrine of American Independence. Dr. Rush contends strongly for the merit of the suggestion; he it was, he says, who suggested to Mr. Paine the propriety of preparing the public mind by means of some work of sufficient length for a perpetual separation from Great Britain; and Paine immediately began to prepare his famous pamphlet in favour of that measure. When completed, it was shown to Dr. Franklin, Samuel Adams, and Judge Wilson, and they approving of it, it was printed by Robert Bell, a Scotchman; and "Common Sense," says Dr. Rush, "burst from the press with an effect which has been rarely produced by types and paper in any age or country."

Whether the idea of independence was original with Paine, or the suggestion of some other person, it is certain that the real merit of efficiency, consistency, and determination of purpose, as well as all the qualities and exertions which could insure success, must unequivocally be his. At this period, no one talked about independence; no one thought about it. Petition after petition had been presented to the English government, but had met with only contemptuous refusals and rejections, and nothing but anger and despair seemed to be excited in the public mind—anger, at the unworthy treatment

received, and despair at being unable to offer any effectual resistance to oppression. It was a gloomy period of our national history. Paine's book—Common Sense—however, brought light out of darkness, and soon produced, what his writings upon all subjects rarely fail to produce, such is their manly, honest, straightforward, and logical character and tendency, "a change of opinion." The people were not prepared, and the greatest compliment which can be paid to the work "Common Sense," is the effect it so rapidly had upon the people who had before no predisposition towards its principles. Paine himself says, in Crisis, No. III.:

"Independence was a doctrine scarce and rare even towards the conclusion of the year 1775. All our politics had been founded on the hope or expectation of making the matter up, —a hope which, though general on the side of America, had never entered the head or heart of the British Court." Again, in Crisis, No. VII., he says: "I found the disposition of the people such that they might have been led by a thread and governed by a reed. Their attachment to Britain was obstinate, and it was at that time a kind of treason to speak against it."

Even Cheetham, who wrote so much in opposition to Paine, and was his most decided and virulent enemy, is compelled to say:

"This pamphlet, of forty octavo pages, holding out relief by proposing independence to an oppressed and despairing people, was published in January, 1776, speaking a language which the colonists had felt, but not thought of. Its popularity, terrible in its consequences to the parent country, was unexampled in the history of the press." At first, involving the colonists, it was thought, in the crime of rebellion, and pointing to a road leading inevitably to ruin, it was read with indignation and alarm; but when the reader (and everybody read *it, recovering* the first shock) reperused it, its arguments

nourishing his feelings, and appealing to his pride, reani[illegible] his hopes, and satisfied his understanding, that "Co[illegible] Sense," backed by the resources and force of the col[illegible] poor and feeble as they were, could alone rescue them fr[illegible] the unqualified oppression with which they were threaten[illegible] The unknown author, in the moments of enthusiasm whi[illegible] succeeded, was an angel sent from heaven to save from all t[illegible] horrors of slavery, by his timely, powerful, and unerri[illegible] counsels, a faithful but abused, a brave but misrepresent[illegible] people.

It is thus we owe our independence, as a nation, with much of the success which has attended our resistance to tyranny and oppression, perhaps even our present national prosperity and greatness, to Paine's zeal, enterprise, talents, and devotion to liberty. The people, when he produced his Common Sense, were not prepared, nor did they comprehend, the notions and doctrines he inculcated; they read first from curiosity only, and then they soon became convinced of the soundness of his opinions. Thus he may be said to have produced the events he desired, by inoculating the entire people with the desire of independence.

There was also another feature, in reference to Paine's literary labours, no less honourable and praiseworthy than those which dictated the principles he so ably advocated, and that was, his entire disinterestedness and freedom from all mercenary motives. Although the success of this work was such that he might have justly made a large and independent fortune from the profits of the sale, yet he attempted nothing of the kind, but generously gave up the copyright to every state in the Union.

It is surprising, so much have we honoured, rewarded, and almost overwhelmed with adulation our revolutionary heroes and statesmen, that Paine, who certainly rendered us greater and more important services than most of them, and was not

inferior to the most distinguished in zeal, devotion, and efficient assistance to the cause, that his merits and invaluable services should be so little appreciated. This does not speak well for our sense of justice, nor our national gratitude, nor that becoming respect and affection which is his rightful due. We do not know an instance of really disinterested conduct, which can be placed upon a par with that of his in reference to the publication of his political works in general, or that of Common Sense in particular. His liberality and conscientious discharge of his duty, extended to all of his serviceable writings, as he was accustomed to call them. "When I bring out my poetical and anecdotical works," he would say, "which will be little better than amusing, I shall sell them; but I must have no gain in view, must make no traffic of my political and theological writings; they are with me matter of principle, and not matter of money; I cannot desire to derive benefit from them, or make them the subject to attain it." And, twenty-seven years after the publication of "Common Sense," he says, in reference to his "Rights of Man," and "Age of Reason,"—the one of which was published in England, in 1791 and 1792, and the other in Paris, in 1795—"I relinquish to the people of England all profit, as I had done to those of America, from the work. My reward existed in the ambition of doing good, and in the independent happiness of my own mind. In my publications I follow the rule I began; that is, to consult with nobody, nor let anybody see what I write till it appears publicly; were I to do otherwise, the case would be that, between the timidity of some who are so afraid of doing wrong that they never do right, the puny judgment of others, and the despicable craft of preferring expedient to right, as if the world were a set of babies in leading-strings, I should get forward with nothing."

"My path is a right line, as straight and clear to me as a ray of *light*. The boldness (if they will have it so) with

which I speak on any subject, is a compliment to the person I address; it is like saying to him, I treat you as a man, and not as a child. With respect to any worldly object, as it is impossible to discover any in me, therefore what I do, and my manner of doing it, ought to be ascribed to a good motive. In a great affair, where the good of man is at stake, I love to work for nothing; and so fully am I under the influence of this principle, that I lose the spirit, the pleasure, and the pride of it, were I conscious that I looked for reward."

In the course of the year 1776, Paine accompanied the army with General Washington, and was with him in his retreat from Hudson river to Delaware river. At this period, our author stood undismayed amid a flying Congress, and the general terror of the country. Yet he continued to boldly assert, that the Americans were in possession of resources sufficient to authorize hope, and he diligently laboured to inspire others with the same sentiments which animated himself. "His pen," says Cheetham, "was an appendage to the army of independence as necessary and formidable as its cannon." Independence was declared by Congress on the 4th July, 1776—mainly the result of the publication of "Common Sense." On the 19th December was first issued "The Crisis," wherein, with a masterly hand, he stated every reason for "hope," and examined all the motives for apprehension. This work was continued at various intervals, and the last number appeared on the 19th April, 1783—the same day a cessation of hostilities was proclaimed.

In 1777, Congress unanimously, and unknown to Mr. Paine, appointed him Secretary in the foreign department. This office obliged him to reside with Congress, wherever it fled, or however it was situated, and he deserved the highest praise for the clearness, firmness, and magnanimity of his conduct. His uprightness, and entire fitness for his office, did not, however, prevent intrigue, or defeat cabal. A difference being

fomented between Congress and him, in relation to one of their Commissioners in Europe, he resigned his secretaryship on the 8th of January, 1779, and declined, at the same time, pecuniary offers made him by the ministers of France and Spain—M. Gerard, and Don Juan Miralles. It would be tedious to enter into a detail of the particulars of this affair; the party junto opposed to him, accused him of some defect of official or technical duty; but as its object was to prevent Deane's fraudulent claim from being paid, he was considered as deserving the approbation of the country, although he was censured by this party for his integrity.

In October, 1780, was published by him, in Philadelphia, a Crisis extraordinary, being a long discussion on taxes. At this time the army was considerably depressed for want of pecuniary means; but he treats their difficulties as of a temporary character, which a little privation and perseverance would remove. Other means, mainly by the instigation of Paine, were adopted by Congress, and it was proposed that a loan, or subsidy, should be negotiated with France. In pursuance of this plan, Colonel Laurens, accompanied by Paine, proceeded to Paris. They sailed in February, 1781, and succeeded in obtaining six millions of livres, as a present, and ten millions, as a loan, with which they safely arrived at Boston in August, having under their charge two millions and a half in silver, and a ship and brig laden with clothing and military stores. Mr. Paine, also, previous to his going to France, when the public finances were in their worst state, and Washington feared the immediate dissolution of the army, for want of pay and necessaries, began and headed a subscription with five hundred dollars, all the money he could raise; this increased to the large amount of fifteen hundred thousand dollars, which supplied the immediate distresses of government, and enabled Washington to carry into effect the plan to encompass and *subdue* Cornwallis, and thus terminate the war.

We might pursue the history of his invaluable services, devotion to the cause of our country much farther, did the brief space to which we are necessarily limited forbi Yet, it is a melancholy fact notwithstanding, we have p mitted a bigoted priesthood so to overrule and control o minds and judgments, that so far from holding him in th grateful remembrance which is so justly his due, the gre majority of Christians, with scarcely one single exceptio have cast out his name as evil, and scarcely name him but as the subject of reproach or calumny. We have, however, one single exception, all we know or ever heard of, so remarkable for its desire of speaking justly and truly concerning him, and more remarkable still, from its being the production of a minister who had been lecturing against infidelity. We give it place as highly honourable to the writer, who was the author of a poem entitled "Pleasures of Poverty." The extract is from a note appended, and the writer—SOLOMON SOUTHWICK.

"No page in history, stained as it is with treachery and falsehood, or cold-blooded indifference to right or wrong, exhibits a more disgraceful instance of public ingratitude than that which Thomas Paine experienced, from an age and country which he had so faithfully served. As the Tintochus of the Revolution, and it is no exaggeration to style him such, we owe everlasting gratitude to his name and memory. Why, then, was he suffered to sink into the most wretched poverty and obscurity, after having in both hemispheres so signally distinguished himself as the friend of liberty and mankind? Was his religion, or want of religion, the real or affected cause? Did not those who feared his talents, make his religion a pretext not only to treat him with cold neglect, but to strip him, if possible, of every laurel he had won in the political field, as the brilliant, undaunted, and successful advocate of freedom? As to his religion, or no religion, God alone

must be the judge and arbiter of that. No human being—no human tribunal, can claim a right even to censure him for it, much less to make it the pretext for defrauding him, either in life or death, of the reward due to his patriotism, or the legitimate fame of his exertions in the cause of suffering humanity. Had Thomas Paine been guilty of any crime, we should be the last to eulogize his memory. But we cannot find he ever was guilty of any other crime than that of advancing his opinions freely upon all subjects connected with public liberty and happiness. If he erred in any of his opinions, since we know that his intentions were pure, we are bound to cover his errors with the mantle of charity. We cannot say here all that we would wish to say. A brief note is insufficient, and this note must necessarily be too brief to do justice to so important a subject. We may, however, safely affirm that Paine's conduct in America was that of a real patriot

"In the French Convention, he displayed the same pure and disinterested spirit; there, his humanity shone forth in his exertions to save, at the risk of his own life, the unfortunate Louis XVI. from the scaffold. His Life, it is true, was written by a ministerial hireling, who strove in vain to blacken his moral character. The late James Cheetham, likewise, wrote his Life; and we have no hesitation in saying, that we knew perfectly well at the time the motives of that author for writing and publishing a work which, we have every reason to believe, is a libel almost from beginning to end. In fact, Cheetham had become tired of this country, and had formed a plan to return to England, and become a ministerial editor, in opposition to Wm. Cobbett, and his Life of Paine was written to pave his way back again. We therefore presume that he acted upon the principle that the end justifies the means. Besides, we believe that he had totally changed his political principles from conviction, and felt the same against everything republican that he had before felt for every-

thing that belonged to monarchy or aristocracy; and hen
the more easily led to believe in the calumnies prop
against Paine, to whose memory we feel bound, by trut
justice alone, to pay the feeble tribute this note co
Had Thomas Paine been a Grecian or Roman patriot in
times, and performed the same public services as he d
this country, he would have had the honour of an Apoth
The Pantheon would have been opened to him, and we s
at this day regard his memory with the same veneratio
we do that of Socrates and Cicero. But posterity will d
justice. Time, that destroys envy and establishes truth
clothe his character in the habiliments that justly belo
it. In fact, at this moment, the one-half or more of
England, where he has been the most abused on account
religion, have adopted a creed so much resembling his, tha
have not the same ground as formerly to quarrel with hi
mory on that account. In the mean time we cannot resi
disposition to say, that in suffering the tomb of the autl
Common Sense, The Crisis, and the Rights of Man
neglected in the first place; and secondly, in permitting
be violated, and his bones shipped off to a foreign co
contrary to all the laws of decency and civilization, we
added nothing to the justice or dignity of our nationa
racter; and we shall rejoice if impartial history tax u
with a gross departure from both."

Such is the testimony which one honest and disinte
Christian professor, and more surprising still, a Chr
minister, bears to the character and services of Paine.
however, applies principally to his revolutionary labou
merit of which, although many, indeed the greater porti
the Christian community attempt to obscure, they d
they dare not absolutely deny. We have hitherto confi
selves to his political character; and if this was his s
to greatness and distinction, we have related sufficien

blish his reputation on the very highest pinnacle of the temple of fame. But it is not so much on his political sagacity and ability, or even on the eminent services he has rendered this nation, exceeding in intrinsic value, as we verily believe, all of his co-labourers and cotemporaries, that we rely; we think he has greater claims than even these to greatness, and the love and veneration of mankind; and it is because these merits have been in a great measure overlooked, or not appreciated, that we close his revolutionary career somewhat abruptly, and leave untold many circumstances and details which are important, and would tend greatly to add, if possible, to our respect for his character, were we not compelled, however reluctantly, to forego their narration.

After the establishment of the independence of the United States of America, of the vigorous and successful exertions to attain which glorious object he had been the animating principle, soul, and support, feeling his exertions no longer requisite here, he embarked for France, and arrived at Paris early in 1787, carrying with him his fame as a literary man, an acute philosopher, and a profound politician. He presented to the Academy of Sciences the model of a bridge which he invented, the principle of which is that on which most of the iron bridges have been constructed, and which has been since so highly celebrated and approved. After remaining in Paris a short time, he left for England, where he arrived on the 3d of September, just thirteen years after his departure for Philadelphia. He then hastened to Thetford, to visit his mother, on whom he had settled a comfortable allowance, sufficient to maintain her, but of which she was some time after deprived by the bankruptcy of the merchant in whom the trust was vested.

The publication of Burke's Reflections on the French Revolution produced, in reply from Mr. Paine, his great, universally known, and justly celebrated work "Rights of M

This book made its appearance in London, in February, 1791, and many hundred thousand copies were rapidly sold. "On the first appearance of the Rights of Man," says Mr. Vale, the ministry of England "saw that it inculcated truths which they could not controvert, and that its principles were the reverse of the existing system of government; they therefore judged that the most politic method would be to treat the work with contempt, to represent it as a foolish and insignificant performance, unworthy of the notice and undeserving the attention of the public." This mode of treatment proving inefficacious, as also a project to buy up the work, they determined to punish the author and publisher. The publisher, Mr. Jordan, compromised the affair with the solicitor of the treasury, and after giving up the documents in his possession, prosecution was commenced against the author on the 21st of May, 1792. Paine was, when this prosecution was first contemplated, in 1791, in Paris, and he returned to London 13th of July, with the view of meeting the proceedings which he expected to be instituted against him. He was at Paris at the time of the flight of the king, and also on his return. The Marquis La Fayette came into his bed-room one morning, before he had risen, and announced the flight, saying, "The birds are flown;" to which Paine replied, "'Tis well; I hope there will be no attempt to recall them." It does not appear that any very decided steps were taken by the English government until the next year, 1792, when it was Mr. Paine's intention to have defended himself personally, but circumstances, which occurred about two months previous to the trial, compelled his return to France. The department of Calais had elected him as their representative in the French National Convention. He proceeded to Dover, with the intention of sailing for Calais, and after experiencing some disgraceful treatment from the government authorities, and well nigh escaping arrest, as an order to detain him arrived only twenty

minutes after his departure, he succeeded in reaching the opposite coast at Calais, where his reception was as flattering and enthusiastic as at Dover it had been mean and disrespectful. Mr. Paine was likewise elected as deputy for Abbeville, Beauvais, and Versailles, as well as the department of Calais, but this distinction having been first awarded him by Calais, he preferred being their representative. On the road to Paris, for the purpose of taking his seat as a member of the National Assembly, he received much attention, and was, on his arrival in Paris, appointed a member of the committee for framing the new constitution. Mean time the trial of Mr. Paine came on in London, at Guildhall, before Lord Kenyon, and a verdict of guilty followed, almost as a matter of course. Mr. Erskine, afterwards Lord Erskine, was his counsel, and addressed the court in a speech of some hours. Mr. Paine remarked, on reading the report of the trial, that Erskine made a very good speech for himself, but that it was a very poor defence of the "Rights of Man." A number of persons were also fined and imprisoned for selling the work. Mean time, in the Convention at Paris, a strong party had gained the ascendancy who contended that Louis the 16th should be put to death, and Paine opposed the execution of the king in the most resolute and determined manner, contending "that the sentence, instead of an act of justice, would appear to all the world, and particularly to their allies, the American states, as an act of vengeance." The proceedings at the Convention assumed a darker and sterner character, but little in unison with Mr. Paine's feelings and judgment. "I went," says he, "but little to the Convention, and then only to make my appearance; because I found it impossible to join in their tremendous decrees, and useless and dangerous to oppose them. My having voted and spoken extensively more than any other member against the execution of the king, had already fixed a mark upon me; neither dared any of my

associates in the Convention to translate and speak in French for me anything I might have dared to write. Pen and ink were then of no use to me. No good could be done by writing, and no printer dared to print; and whatever I might have written for my private amusement, as anecdotes of the times, would have been continually exposed to be examined, and tortured into any meaning that the rage of party might fix upon it; and as to softer subjects, my heart was in distress at the fate of my friends, and my harp was hung upon the weeping willows."

Mr. Paine's gentle and conciliatory manners and conduct had long averted a catastrophe which seemed the natural result of his precarious position, but he was nevertheless exposed to considerable danger. The first attack was an act of the Convention which decreed that all persons in France, born in England, should be arrested and imprisoned. Mr. Paine, however, being a member of the Convention, and bearing the title of "Citizen of France," escaped for the time, but when a motion was made by Bourdon de l'Oise for expelling foreigners from the Convention, an application was made to the two committees of "Public Safety," of which Robespierre was the dictator, and he was forthwith arrested under the decree for imprisoning persons born in England. The MS. of the "Age of Reason," First Part, he placed in the hands of Joel Barlow. He appeared to regard it, and justly so, as his most important work. He wished it to be a legacy to mankind, but the precarious state of affairs in France, and the uncertain tenure by which the most distinguished and disinterested patriots and friends of humanity held their lives at this time in France, admitted no farther delay. Mr. Paine had not finished his book six hours before he was arrested, and he was in almost daily expectation of being sent to the guillotine: so *that his sincerity* and truth cannot be disputed. He says: "*The circumstances* that have now taken place in France, of

the total abolition of the whole national order of priesthood, and of everything pertaining to compulsive systems of religion, and compulsive articles of faith, has not only precipitated my intention, but rendered a work of this kind exceedingly necessary, lest, in the general wreck of superstition, of false systems of government, and false theology, we lose sight of morality, of humanity, and of the theology that is true."

When Mr. Paine had been in prison about three weeks, the Americans, residing in Paris, in a body demanded of the Convention the release of their fellow-citizen. Their request was refused, and in a few days all communication was interdicted between the prisoners and their friends on the outside, without an especial order, which could very rarely or never be obtained. In this gloomy and miserable condition, Mr. Paine continued for six months with scarcely a ray of hope, or the faintest expectation of escaping the fate of many of his friends, who were the daily victims of the Reign of Terror. He passed his sad and dreary hours as well as he was able, by writing many light, fugitive, fancy pieces, in verse and prose, and also in the Second Part of the Age of Reason. When he had been imprisoned about eight months, he was seized with a violent fever, which made him insensible for over a month; and although he felt the effects of the attack ever afterward, it is by no means improbable that it was the means of saving his life at the time, as the fall of Robespierre was the first thing he heard of at his recovery. He did not immediately regain his liberty, but upon memorializing Mr. Monroe, the American minister, who, however, had received no instructions from the United States government concerning him, he eventually obtained his release on the 4th of November, 1794, after being almost a year in confinement. Mr. Monroe kindly invited him to his house, where he remained for about eighteen *months. The* description of his situation whilst in prison, a*his very narrow* escape from the scaffold, will be interes

to the readers. It is an extract from one of his letters, descriptive of the circumstances, to a friend:

"I was one of the nine members that composed the first committee of constitution. Six of them have been destroyed; Sieyes and myself have survived—he, by bending with the times, and I, by not bending. The other survivors joined Robespierre, and signed with him the warrant for my arrest. After the fall of Robespierre, he was seized and imprisoned in his turn, and sentenced to transportation. He has since apologized to me for having signed the warrant, by saying he was in danger, and was obliged to do it.

"Herault Sechelles, an acquaintance of Mr. Jefferson, and a good patriot, was my *suppliant* as a member of the committee of constitution; that is, he was to supply my place, if I had not accepted, or had resigned, being next in number of votes to me. He was imprisoned in the Luxembourg with me, was taken to the tribunal and the guillotine, and I, his principal, was left.

"There were but two foreigners in the Convention, Anacharsis Cloots and myself. We were both put out of the Convention by the same vote, arrested by the same order, and carried to prison together the same night. He was taken to the guillotine, and I was again left. Joel Barlow was with us when we went to prison.

"Joseph Lebon, one of the vilest characters that ever existed, and who made the streets of Arras run with blood, was my suppliant as member of the Convention for the department of the Pas de Calais. When I was put out of the Convention, he came and took my place. When I was liberated from prison, and voted again into the Convention, he was sent to the same prison, and took my place there, and he went to the guillotine instead of me. He supplied my place all through. One hundred and sixty-eight persons were taken out of the Luxembourg *in one night*, and one hundred and sixty of them

guillotined the next day, of which I was to have been one; but my escape is curious, and has all the appearance of accident.

"The room in which I was lodged was on the ground floor, and one of a long range of rooms under a gallery, and the door of it opened outward, and flat against the wall, so that when it was open the inside of the door appeared outward, and the contrary when it was shut. I had three comrades, fellow-prisoners with me, Joseph Vanhuile, of Bruges, since president of the municipality of that town, Michael Robins, and Bastine of Louvain.

"When persons by scores and hundreds were to be taken out of prison for the guillotine, it was always done in the night, and those who performed that office had a private mark or signal by which they knew what rooms to go to, and what persons to take. We, as I have said, were four, and the door of our room was marked, unobserved by us, with that number in chalk; but it happened that the mark was put on when the door was open and flat against the wall, and thereby came on the inside when we shut it at night, and the destroying angel passed by it. A few days after this Robespierre fell, and the American ambassador arrived, reclaimed me, and invited me to his house.

"During the whole of my imprisonment, prior to the fall of Robespierre, there was no time when I could think my life worth twenty-four hours, and my mind was made up to meet its fate. The Americans in Paris went in a body to the Convention to reclaim me, but without success. There was no party among them with respect to me. My only hope, then, rested on the government of America, that it would remember me. But the icy heart of ingratitude, in whatever man it may be *placed*, has neither feeling nor sense of honour. The *letter of Mr. Jefferson* has served to wipe away the reproach *and done justice* to the mass of the people of America."

Mr. Paine, after leaving the house of the American minister, lodged at M. Bonville's, associating with the great men of the day, Condorcet, Volney, Mercier, Barlow, &c., &c., and sometimes dining with Bonaparte and his generals. "When Bonaparte returned from Italy, he called on Mr. Paine, and invited him to dinner, and in the course of a rapturous address to him, declared that a statue of gold ought to be erected to him in every city in the universe, assuring him that he always slept with his book, Rights of Man, under his pillow, and conjured him to honour him with his correspondence and advice." Mr. Paine also amused himself with bridge and ship modelling, and in pursuing his favourite studies, mathematics and natural philosophy. "These models," says a correspondent of that time, "exhibit an extraordinary degree not only of skill, but of taste in mechanics, and are wrought with extreme delicacy entirely by his own hands. The largest of these, the model of a bridge, is nearly four feet in height; the iron works, the chains, and every other article belonging to it, were forged and manufactured by himself. It is intended as the model of a bridge to be constructed across the Delaware, extending four hundred and eighty feet, with only one arch. The other for a narrower river, and is likewise a single arch, and of his own workmanship, excepting the chains, which were cut out of pasteboard, by a lady. He was offered three thousand pounds for the models, and refused it. He also forged the model of a crane, of considerable merit." Mr. Clio Richman, who supplied the above information in regard to the pursuits of Mr. Paine, states that during this time he also published his "Dissertation on First Principles of Government," "Essay on Finance," his First and Second Parts of the "Age of Reason," his Letter to Washington, his Address to the Theophilanthropists, Letter to Erskine, &c., &c. He *has been much censured* by some for his letter to Washington; *but when it is* considered the indifference evinced by

Washington as to his safety in the moments of extreme peril, and this, notwithstanding the high opinion which he professed to entertain of his services in behalf of American independence, we must admit that General Washington's behaviour, in this instance, reflects no honour on his character. We have, however, a clue to the whole matter, in the remarkable prudence which was so prominent a feature in Washington's character. This country was at that time a most religious country, and devoted entirely to the clergy. The publication of the Age of Reason had utterly destroyed all Paine's popularity, and the whole nation, led on by the clergy, were disposed to show him no quarter or favour. That Washington should interest himself in behalf of an individual so obnoxious to piety, and the universally prevailing fanaticism of the times, would be exposing the popularity of Washington's administration to more danger than was deemed desirable; and he was left to the tender mercies of Robespierre, whose timely death, and not the interposition of Washington, saved him. "Notwithstanding this ingratitude, this country," he would say, "is the country of my heart, and the place of my political and literary birth. It was the American revolution made me an author, and forced into action the mind that had been dormant, and had no wish for public life, nor has it now." Wearied with the direction which affairs took in France, which, he used to say, "was the promised land, and not the land of promise," he had long sighed for his own dear America. He made many efforts to cross the Atlantic, but they were ineffectual. The American minister made choice of him to send despatches to his government, but he had been voted into the Convention again, and they only could grant a passport. During this delay, the opportunity was lost, perhaps fortunately, for an English frigate visited the vessel, and searched *the ship, every part* of it, for Thomas Paine. It was afterwards agreed he should come with Commodore Barney, in

vessel he had engaged. Fortunately for him, something occurred to prevent it, for the vessel sunk at sea. The following extract will show the affectionate regard which he constantly cherished for the safety and freedom of the country whose affairs were the means of launching him into public life:

"You touch me on a very tender point, when you say that my friends on your side of the water cannot be reconciled to the idea of my abandoning America, even for my native England.

"A thousand years hence,—for I must indulge a few thoughts,—perhaps in less, America may be what England now is. The innocence of her character, that won the hearts of all nations in her favour, may sound like a romance, and her illimitable virtue as if it had never been. The ruins of that liberty which thousands bled to obtain, may just furnish materials for a village tale, or extort a sigh from rustic sensibility; while the fashionable of the day, enveloped in dissipation, shall deride the principle and deny the fact.

"When we contemplate the fall of empires, and the extinction of the nations of the ancient world, we see but little more to excite our regret than the mouldering ruins of pompous palaces, magnificent monuments, lofty pyramids, and walls and towers of the most costly workmanship; but when the empire of America shall fall, the subject for contemplative sorrow will be infinitely greater than crumbling brass or marble can inspire. It will not then be said, Here stood a temple of vast antiquity, here rose a Babel of invisible height, or there a palace of sumptuous magnificence; but here, ah! painful thought! the noblest work of human wisdom, the greatest scene of human glory, the fair cause of freedom, rose and fell! Read this, and then ask if I forgot America."

This was addressed, Mr. Vale tells us, to a lady of the name of Nicholson, who was afterwards married to Colonel Few.

In July, 1802, when Mr. Jefferson was President, he addressed a letter to Mr. Paine, in which he thus expresses himself:

"You express a wish, in your letter, to return to America by a national ship. Mr. Dawson, who brings over the treaty, and who will present you this letter, is charged with orders to the captain of the Maryland to receive and accommodate you back, if you can be ready to return at such a short warning. You will, in general, find us returned to sentiments worthy of former times; in these it will be your glory to have steadily laboured, and with as much effect as any man living. That you may live long to continue your useful labours, and reap the reward in the thankfulness of nations, is my sincere prayer. Accept the assurance of my high esteem and affectionate attachment.

"THOMAS JEFFERSON.

"Washington, July, 1802."

Mr. Paine was not able to avail himself of this vessel, as the notice was too short. He went to Havre, but there were several British frigates cruising in sight, which delayed him, and finally he embarked on the 1st of September, and landed in Baltimore on the 30th October, 1802.

His arrival in the United States could not fail to create considerable sensation, which he thus describes, in a letter to his friend, Clio Richman, who, it appears, took leave of him at Havre, previous to his departure:

"My dear Friend,—Mr. Monroe, who is appointed minister extraordinary to France, takes charge of this, to be delivered to Mr. Este, banker in Paris, to be forwarded to you.

"I arrived at Baltimore 30th October, and you can have no idea of the agitation which my arrival occasioned. From

New Hampshire to Georgia (an extent of fifteen hundred miles), every newspaper was filled with applause or abuse.

"My property in this country has been taken care of by my friends, and is now worth six thousand pounds sterling; which, put in the funds, will bring me four hundred pounds sterling per year.

"Remember me, in friendship and affection, to your wife and family, and in the circle of our friends.

"Yours, in friendship,

"THOMAS PAINE."

Mr. Paine continued but a short time in Baltimore; but during his brief stay, it is related of him that he was accosted by a Mr. Hargrove, who, addressing him, said: "You are Mr. Paine?" "Yes." "My name is Hargrove, sir; I am minister of the New Jerusalem church, here. We, sir, explain the Scripture in its true meaning. The key has been lost above four thousand years, and we have found it." "It must have been very rusty," said Paine, dryly.

He visited Washington, and was kindly received by President Jefferson, with whom he kept up a constant correspondence to the day of his death. He had invited Paine's return to the United States, and said, "When he arrives, if there be an office in my gift suitable for him to fill, I will give it to him. I will never abandon old friends to make room for new ones." Mr. Paine had, however, in a letter to his friend, Clio Richman, expressed his determination not to take office. "I have," said he, "no occasion to ask, nor do I intend to accept, any office or place in the government." He soon after went to New York, and put up at the City Hotel, where Grant Thorburn, who is the author of several scurrilous libels in regard to him, went to see him. Grant Thorburn is, however, too well known for his mercenary time-serving, and above all, for his peculiar church-going piety, to be very reliable

authority. He says, in his pamphlet, that his only object in visiting Mr. Paine, was to see the man who had written Common Sense, and having gratified his curiosity, he abruptly retired. Thorburn was, says Mr. Vale, a professor of religion, and held some office in a Baptist church. We had always supposed, from reading Lawrie Todd, that he was one of the bluest kind of Presbyterians. However, the Baptists are not much inferior in their rigid, savage piety, for Mr. Thorburn's fellow-members, hearing that he had ventured to shake hands with Mr. Paine, thought proper to suspend him from the church on that account, although there is little doubt but that he amply redeemed his lost character in the estimation of his pious brethren, by the reviling, contumely, and slanders he so unsparingly has heaped upon Mr. Paine's reputation. It indeed appeared to be an established system or policy, on the part of the Christian community, to defame him; and Christian doctrines were demonstrated and clearly proved, beyond all controversy, by the simple assertion that Paine was a bad man, and certainly drank more than was becoming. Even the truth and divinity of the Bible is clearly established by such kind of logic, or reasoning, as is remembered in a late discussion between Dr. Berg and Mr. Barker. To Mr. Barker's attacks on the teachings and character of the Bible, it was deemed quite satisfactory and conclusive to oppose a letter of Carver's, written against Paine, in a petulant humour, and when wrought upon and instigated by Cheetham, his most virulent enemy. Mr. Grant Thorburn republished this letter in his "Forty Years' Residence," and Carver replies, and thus endeavours to excuse himself for writing it: "When I first read the Life of Grant Thorburn, I made this remark, and wrote it on the cover of his book: I have read this Life of Grant Thorburn. I presume a great part of which it is composed has no more connexion with his life than mine, or the Pope of Rome, to wit, the corresponding letters between

Thomas Paine and myself, and those letters I have cut out of his book. Those letters were first printed by Cheetham, without my consent, for base purposes, after he became a tory, and a hypocritical turncoat, like Grant Thorburn, who has now reprinted them for the same purpose. They were written by me and Paine, in anger. Mr. Paine had boarded with me without any regular agreement, and we quarrelled about the bill, what has happened a thousand times to other people. He wrote angrily, and I angrily replied. But the affair was settled amicably by Walter Morton and John Fellows. I think some things Paine said of me were not in earnest, and I answered in anger. The letters should have been burnt. But Cheetham said many things of Paine that were not true. I told him 'I believed he had had his hand crossed with British gold.' When Paine was on his death-bed I wrote him the following letter. This shows what opinion I had of him. I think him one of the greatest men that ever lived."

"Dear Sir,—I have heard that you are much indisposed in health, and that your mind, at present, is not reconciled to me. Be that as it may, I can assure you that, on my part, I bear no ill will, but still remain your sincere well-wisher. I am still a zealous supporter and defender of the principles that you have advocated, believing that they are founded on immortal truth and justice; therefore I think it a pity that you or myself should depart this life with envy in our hearts against each other, and I firmly believe that no difference would have taken place between us, had not some of those of your pretended friends endeavoured to have caused a separation of friendship between us.

"I want, sir, nothing of you or from you, but only that the ignorant and superstitious herd may not have it in their power to exclaim and say, that Thomas Paine or Carver died without a reconciliation with each other. I have often told my

friends, if I were on my dying bed I should send for you, hoping that all our differences might be buried in oblivion before our bodies were buried in the grave, as I hope that my dying pillow may not be planted with thorns. I consider that time with me is short, and perhaps shorter with you. If I never should see you again in this world, I wish you all the consolation that your great mind is capable of enjoying, and that you may resign yourself with full confidence on your Maker, and leave a noble testimony to the world of the independency of your mind, and honesty of your heart; and this, my friend, will produce to you more comfort than all the prayers of all the priests in the Christian world.

"Yours, in friendship,

"WM. CARVER."

These last letters and explanations of the circumstances under which Carver addressed Paine, and the acknowledgment of the injustice which he had done to his character, and his profound respect and regard for him notwithstanding, as well as adherence to his principles—"I think him one of the greatest men that ever lived"—not one syllable of all this was elicited from Christian candour, fairness, or integrity. The Rev. Dr. Berg read, on the occasion we have before alluded to, passages from Carver's former letters, dwelling upon, emphasizing, and commenting on all the points that were of a vituperative character, which was received with a perfect yell of delight and exultation by the amiable, Christian, and pious portion of the audience, who hailed all these scurrilities and slanders as a triumphant refutation of Infidelity, and above all, as clear, incontestable, and demonstrable proof of the divinity, truth, and authority of the Bible. "Is it possible," was the natural reflection of thousands of men of intelligence, who had scarcely before given these matters more than a passing thought, and received all that had been taught them from the

pulpit as acknowledged and established truth, "Is it possible that Christianity and the Bible have nothing higher, better, or more of the nature of logic or reason to sustain them? What matters it to us if Paine was a bad man? it is his book, his arguments, his reasoning we have to do with, and they have to do with. Why do they not reply to his writings? There surely must be something in them—something very powerful—something beyond their skill, learning, wit, or ability, or they would do so." Such was the very natural result of the reflections of men of intelligence, when once their attention was excited, or brought to bear upon the subject.

The compiler of these Memoirs being surrounded by pious influences, and having undoubted trust and confidence in clerical teachings, yet could not, at all times, resist the obtrusion of some doubts and misgivings upon some points in reference to these so-called sacred truths. We could do no less than have recourse to the best and most approved Christian authors, to satisfy our scruples. Among the rest was Bishop Watson, who attempts a reply to Paine, undoubtedly the best and most argumentative, as well as gentlemanly in style and character, which has ever been written. Unfortunately for the Bishop, he states his opponent's arguments (at least some of them), and then gives his answer. The following argument of Paine's appeared to us, even as imperfectly stated by the Bishop, to be utterly beyond all the skill or capability of the Bishop to furnish a natural or satisfactory reply to; and yet it must be evident that this argument, if it cannot be answered, is fatal to all the claims of Revelation. We have copied it out, and presented it to many clergymen of reputation, and entreated them to take it into their pulpits with them, to look at it attentively, examine it thoroughly, and if they have half, or even a thousandth part of the affection with which they pretend to regard the souls of men, to confute it thoroughly. *It has never once* been attempted—who, amongst the clergy,

dare hope of success, when so great a man as the Bishop of Llandaff has so signally failed?

"Every national church or religion has established itself by pretending some special mission from God, communicated to certain individuals. The Jews have their Moses; the Christians their Jesus Christ, their apostles, and saints; and the Turks their Mahomet, as if the way to God was not open to every man alike.

"Each of these churches show certain books, which they call Revelation, or the Word of God. The Jews say that their Word of God was given by God to Moses, face to face. The Christians say, their Word of God came by divine inspiration; and the Turks say that their Word of God (the Koran) was brought by an angel from heaven. Each of those churches accuse the other of unbelief; and, for my own part, I disbelieve them all.

"As it is necessary to affix right ideas to words, I will, before I proceed further into the subject, offer some other observations on the word Revelation. Revelation, when applied to religion, means something communicated immediately from God to man.

"No one will dispute or deny the power of the Almighty to make such a communication, if he pleases. But admitting, for the sake of the case, that something has been revealed to a certain person, and not revealed to any other person, it is revelation to that person only. When he tells it to a second person, a second to a third, and a third to a fourth, and so on, it ceases to be a revelation to all those persons. It is revelation to the first person only, and hearsay to every other, and consequently they are not obliged to believe it.

"It is a contradiction in terms and ideas to call anything a revelation that comes to us at second hand, either verbally or in writing. Revelation is necessarily limited to the first communication; *after this* it is only an account of something

which that person says was a revelation made to him, and though he may find himself obliged to believe it, it cannot be incumbent on me to believe it in the same manner; for it was not a revelation made to me, and I have only his word for it that it was made to him. When Moses told the children of Israel that he received the two tables of the commandments from the hands of God, they were not obliged to believe him, because they had no other authority for it than his telling them so, and I have no other authority for it than some historian telling me so. The commandments carry no internal evidence of divinity with them. They contain some good moral precepts, such as any man, qualified to be a lawgiver, or legislator, could produce himself, without having recourse to any supernatural intervention.

"When I am told that the Koran was written in heaven, and brought to Mahomet by an angel, the account comes too near the same kind of hearsay evidence and second-hand authority as the other. I did not see the angel myself, and therefore I have a right not to believe it.

"When also I am told that a woman, called the Virgin Mary, said, or gave out, that she was with child, without any cohabitation with a man, and that her betrothed husband, Joseph, said that an angel told him so, I have a right to believe them or not; such a circumstance required a much stronger evidence than their bare word for it; but we have not even this, for neither Joseph nor Mary wrote any such matter themselves; it is only reported by others that they said so. It is hearsay upon hearsay, and I do not choose to rest my belief upon such evidence."

It is admitted by the Bishop at once, that revelation, under such circumstances, is not revelation to us—it is simple testimony; and he then claims our belief on the ground of this testimony being accompanied with miracles; but independent *of the clear* and evident insufficiency of miracles being proof

of anything, except some extraordinary and concealed power in the performer of them—yet we have the same objection to them as to Revelation; they are not performed before our eyes; we are not spectators; they rest entirely on hearsay testimony, which may or may not be true, and most probably is not. They are at best but paper miracles, of which any one at all imaginative can manufacture any number required. The fact is that Mr. Paine's book, the "Age of Reason," is a masterpiece of clear, simple, honest argument. The main scope of it is of that conclusive character as to convince at once the man of integrity, the honest and disinterested inquirer after truth. There is no special pleading, no prevarication, no begging the question; all is fair and aboveboard; it comes home to the bosom of the true-hearted, and you feel the sincerity, the integrity, the thorough honesty of the author. That the priesthood should decline entering the lists with such a book is but to be expected. What would the most labyrinthine web of sophistry that was ever woven avail against such an antagonist? There was but one way to meet him, and the clergy have availed themselves of it with an energy, an industry, and zeal worthy of a better cause. They have assailed his character—they fairly covered him up, overwhelmed with a huge mountain of calumnies, almost buried him out of sight. So untiring have been their exertions, so fertile have been their inventions, so thoroughly and completely have they enveloped him in the hideous disguise with which they have surrounded him, that even his friends, and those who knew him best, almost began to imagine that instead of the good and the great, the intellectual, and the noble, and the disinterested man whom they had respected so much, and regarded so highly, that he was so depraved and corrupt as to be only deserving of universal detestation and abhorrence.

In the case of Paine, we have the best illustration ever submitted to the world of the efficacy and sagacity of that piece

of advice which has passed into a proverb, as to the dealing with an antagonist: "When you are unable to answer the arguments of a man, assail his character." To have answered Paine with anything at all approaching argument, or analytical reasoning, would have been positive insanity. The clergy felt their utter incompetency, but it was necessary to do something; the craft was in danger; the axe was laid to the root of the whole system of priestcraft. Othello's occupation looked very much like passing away for ever, and the holy and reverend gentlemen bestirred themselves accordingly; and if there is any merit in untiring industry, and unwearied and the most strenuous and indefatigable exertions in a bad cause, the clergy are fairly entitled to it. The law was invoked in England, and the most stringent measures resorted to against the sellers, the readers, and even the possessors of the Age of Reason; whilst here, in our land, pious execrations and fulminations the most vindictive issued from every pulpit, and the unfortunate individual that had read Paine's writings, and had begun to think there was some little truth or good sense in his reasoning, if he dared to express such an opinion, lost his caste in society, was ostracised by his fellow-citizens, and his very name cast out as evil. It is not a little amusing to have observed with what an affectation of contempt the clergy treated Paine's reasoning. It was too scurrilous, too puerile to require notice; "it had been answered a thousand times;" although the when, or the where, or by whom, they have never yet condescended to inform us.

One part of Paine's character the reverend gentlemen dwelt upon with great satisfaction—he was a drunkard—and drunkenness was a most hateful vice. It was altogether impossible that a drunkard could form any correct opinions upon any *subject; they* must, of necessity, be worthless. It was edifying in the extreme to hear the loathsome, the hateful vice of drunkenness inveighed against in the pulpit. How debasing

to the character—how ruinous to the constitution—what fearful consequences attended such depravity—and then Paine was exhibited as a striking illustration. The clergy made considerable capital out of this slander; and so industriously was such a notion circulated, that even his friends and admirers thought there must be some truth in the report, particularly as Paine lived in an intemperate age. Hospitality, even amongst the most reputable people, consisted in drinking to excess; and no class of persons indulged to greater extent than the very reverend clergy themselves. Perhaps, even at the present day, there are few persons but believe there must be some foundation for such a charge which we have even lately heard reiterated from the pulpit by several clergymen, "vile and loathsome inebriate;" and upon one occasion the congregation, if they had any doubts upon the matter, were referred to one Mr. Bruin, a gentleman of wealth and influence, in the city of Philadelphia, who was resident in Paine's immediate neighbourhood in the city of New York, previous to Mr. Paine's decease.

Mr. Bruin we deemed it a matter of importance to visit, in company with a friend, and were received by him with politeness, and in a gentlemanly manner. He is a very venerable gentleman, intelligent, but strongly imbued with religious prejudices. He had seen Paine often, thought him somewhat in destitute circumstances, made some effort to relieve him. But his sympathies were most excited by his religious sentiments, which he supposed to be attended with such fearful consequences; that he had called at Mr. Paine's lodgings repeatedly, accompanied by a pious minister, with a view of talking to him, but Mr. Paine refused, and sometimes with considerable asperity, to have anything to say to them on such subjects. We inquired particularly as to Mr. Paine's intemperance. *He had never* seen him in that condition, had never

heard such were his habits, nor any report of that nature co cerning him.

We have pursued our inquiries in other quarters, and hav gleaned some information from other sources; and althoug to use a vulgar expression, we were impressed with the opinio that where there was so much smoke there must be some fir yet without going to the extent of exalting Mr. Paine abo humanity, and altogether incapable of weakness or frailty, y we feel quite disposed to acquit him of this charge, and gi the entire credit, merit, and all that pertains to the framin of this count in the bill of indictment against him, to th reverend clergy, as the sole manufacturers, contrivers, a inventors.

There was another charge against him, which, as it imp cated the reputation of a lady, it was deemed due to her vindicate before the legal tribunals of his country, which w effected most triumphantly, and to the complete discomfitu of his base and cowardly accuser.

When Mr. Paine arrived in America, he invited over M and Mrs. Bonneville, and their children. At Bonnevill house at Paris, he had for years found a home, a friendly sh ter, when the difficulty of getting supplies of money fro America, and other and many ills, assailed him. Bonnevil and his family were poor, and sunk in the world. Mr. Pain therefore, though he was not their inmate without remuner tion, offered them in return an asylum with him in Americ Mrs. Bonneville and her three boys, to whom he was a frie during his life and at his death, soon joined him at New Yor If any part can be marked out as infamous and wicked, is Cheetham's suggestion upon this just and generous condu of Mr. Paine's to the Bonneville family. But although t *clergy endorsed* this slander, and piously and industrious *circulated it to* the best of their ability, yet the chief ex *rator having* been prosecuted, somewhat deterred the rest

the liberal use which they would otherwise have been glad to make of this foul calumny. As to other traits in his character, it is scarcely worth the attention or severe scrutiny which is necessary to redeem him altogether from the load of obloquy which had been cast upon him. Mr. Vale seems to have taken considerable pains in the investigation, and is so very strict in his impartiality that he chronicles his infirmities with great scrupulosity. He tells us of his writing his foolish angry letter to Carver; that he was to some extent penurious in his old age; that in sickness he was sometimes peevish and angry. "These are all," he says, "the personal blemishes we can discover, and these are counterbalanced by the most noble and social qualities. He had a heart to feel for the distresses of mankind, and a head to conceive the means of relief. The charge of Madame Bonneville and family was at once an act of justice, generosity, and gratitude. Mr. Paine had every prominent virtue, and to these he added the most social qualities. He was in public, without being a great talker, cheerful, communicative, abounding in information and anecdote, and in private not less agreeable." Mr. Vale also speaks of his morals and decorum, his love of truth, and utter abhorrence of falsehood and prevarication. His inquiries among his friends and associates all result in the entire acquittal of the charge of drunkenness. Mr. Lovett, of the City Hotel (where Paine was boarding), declares he drank less than any other of his boarders; and Mr. Jarvis, the eminent artist, and a man of very superior talents, with whom he was upon terms of the greatest possible intimacy to the close of his life, avers that Mr. Paine did not, could not drink much. Mr. Vale justly observes, "that the subject is puerile in itself; were there not a host who sincerely believe Mr. Paine to have been a drunkard or a sot, others of more liberal minds would at once have perceived that he who possessed all his faculties to an advanced

age unimpaired, could not commonly indulge in such gross excesses." "How, then," continues Mr. Vale, "are we to regard this slander, its circulation, its reiteration, the boldness of the assailants and the variety of forms it assumed, from the pulpit, the press, in prints and in private, from mouth to mouth, till its very friends were deceived, as we were when we commenced this investigation?" What now is the secret cause of slander, but the desire to check the influence of an individual, or his writings? Could the "Age of Reason" and the "Rights of Man" have been replied to as he replied to Burke, we should never have heard these slanders. But why did the slanderers fix on the minor vice of inebriety? It is clear that there was no pretence for other vices. "What an amalgamation do the slanderers of Paine present! The young girl, of pious education, vociferating the filthy, drunken Tom Paine; the pious teacher, perhaps also deceived, but without examination, preaching from the pulpit that the opponent of the gospel scheme lived and died a degraded drunken being. To these are added the arch hypocrite, who knows the slander, but from interested motives joins the bitter cry of Tom Paine and inebriety. To these, again, are added the thousands of decent people of all religions, who, finding it fashionable to pronounce the name of Paine with a sneer, generously believe what everybody says; and these add their mite of slander, making in the aggregate a mountain. But to these also must be added the politician, the sneaking, artful man, who could not afford to lose a vote, and who, conscious of the contrary, chimes in with the pious, and pronounces Tom Paine as drunken and dirty, being willing to believe what he wishes to be true, as an excuse for himself, and an assurance that the speaker, the politican, is neither sot, drunkard, nor infidel. *The mass have* sought to overwhelm the name of Paine by *associating it with* intoxication, for which there is not a shadow *of proof.* If, now, we push back the slander, on whom [illegible]

it rest? Are the sincere justified, because of their sincerity, in propagating slander? Is it in accordance with their religion? It is evident it exists, and with religion the most sincere. It exists with the ministers of religion, some of whom were sincere, but ignorant, others not sincere, but interested; but the whole body were contaminated, ministers and people, by circulating slander. This, then, was the visible religion Mr. Paine would have uprooted, while the political tyrants and sycophants, who joined the crusade from the basest of motives,—and they have now their representatives,—but ill contrast in sentiment and feelings with the noble principles of the man whose fame they would suppress. 'The world my country, to do good my religion,' were the sublime sentiments of this sincere and able advocate of human rights, whose fair fame has been thus abused."

We have transcribed the foregoing remarks of Mr. Vale's as exceedingly just and pertinent, and as expressing, better than we otherwise can, the state of affairs in America, and the feelings and dispositions of the people in regard to him.

Neglected by his former friends and associates, who preferred the countenance of the clergy, and the good-will of the community, to vindicating the character and reputation of a man to whom they were so deeply indebted, and bound by every tie of gratitude, respect, and good-will; with the popular voice almost unanimously exclaiming, "Crucify him, crucify him;" it cannot be supposed but that such an unexpected and undeserved reception as he experienced in this country, must have affected his health and spirits in no small measure. To meet with reproach, neglect, contumely, and scorn, where he expected, and had a right to expect, a nation's gratitude, and a universal testimony of affectionate remembrance, was, to say the least, trying circumstances to be placed in. It was in vain that a few attached and sincere friends attempted to stem the current of popular prejudice, by the inquiry

"What evil hath he done?" The only result was precisely as in the well-remembered case alluded to—they cried out so much the more, "Crucify him, crucify him." A short time previous to his leaving France for this country, he wrote to a friend, describing his health as excellent, and his strength unimpaired, and yet he lived not much above six years after his return to this country; and the probability is, that disappointment, neglect, and ingratitude were not without their natural effects, and that, under more favourable circumstances, his life would have been materially prolonged. As it is not our purpose to chronicle the petty annoyances he received from malevolence, fanaticism, and ignorance, we shall omit much that might perhaps be interesting, so far as to show the intolerant age in which he lived, and the very amiable character of the religion and people whom he had served, and who requited him with such baseness and ingratitude. It is probable that history has no corresponding example of any man being treated with so much injustice. Cheetham's book was got up for the express and avowed purpose of defaming him; and the pious lie in relation to Mrs. Bonneville, as well as a letter manufactured for the same purpose, containing much pious twaddle, and attempting to convey the idea of Mr. Paine's change of sentiments and recantation in the prospect of death, are all described as meritorious, by Judge Hoffman, who presided at the trial of Cheetham for libel. The tendency, he said, was to serve the cause of religion; as if that could possibly be a good cause which could employ such base, foolish, wicked, and dishonourable means to promote its ends and purposes.

And now calumny, misrepresentation, slander, and ingratitude had done its work, and Mr. Paine, wearied and worn alike in mind and body, was descending, step after step, *to the narrow house* appointed for all living. He had little to *live for, and nothing* to hope for—and so he died. A hero

attached friends remained, who duly appreciated his character, and valued him accordingly. They soothed his dying pillow, and attended him to the last. He was, like Voltaire, pestered continually with priests of various denominations, who, hearing of his sickness, and the small probability there was of his recovery, endeavoured to obtain admittance, with the hope of extorting from the dying man, thus stretched on the rack of nature, some faint acknowledgment of something which might be construed into a confession of the truth or excellency of Christianity, not that they were very scrupulous, in the absence of evidence, of inventing something which would answer their purpose, as the letter of Dr. Manly, and other pious legends, which are too ridiculous to contest, and even to relate, and are only suited to the meridian of the shallow-pated and superstitious fanatics for whose benefit they were manufactured.

Among the few friends who firmly adhered to Mr. Paine to the last, was an artist of great celebrity, knowledge of the world, and discernment—Mr. Jarvis. He was almost his constant attendant, and he bears most ample testimony to Mr. Paine's moral worth, and scrupulous integrity of character. He relates many anecdotes concerning some of these pious intruders, who were accustomed to haunt Mr. Paine, and invade his premises, for the amiable purpose of expressing their holy horror and indignation at his sentiments.

He usually took a nap after dinner, and would not be disturbed, let who would call upon him. One afternoon, a very old lady, dressed in a large scarlet-hooded cloak, knocked at the door, and inquired for Mr. Thomas Paine. Mr. Jarvis told her he was asleep. "I am very sorry for that," she said, "for I want to see him particularly." Thinking it a pity to make an old woman call twice, Mr. Jarvis took her into Mr. Paine's bed-room, and awoke him. He rose upon one elbow; then, with an expression of eye that made the old woma

stagger back a step or two, he asked, "What do you want?" "Is your name Paine?" "Yes." "Well, then, I am come from Almighty God, to tell you that if you do not repent of your sins, and believe in our blessed Saviour, Jesus Christ, you will be damned, and ——" "Poh, poh, it is not true; you were not sent with any such impertinent message. Jarvis, send her away. Pshaw! he would not send such a foolish, ugly old woman about with his messages. Go away—go back, and shut the door." The old lady retired, in considerable consternation, and raising both her hands, walked away without saying another word.

We have a recollection of reading an account of two Catholic priests, whom Mr. Paine had been induced to permit access to him, thinking that they had some medical skill which might be serviceable. They appeared, however, to be as ignorant and fanatical as their Protestant brethren; and when they began to denounce Mr. Paine's sentiments in the canting and usual formula, and predict for him all sorts of suffering in another world, as the penalty of his belief, or want of belief, his patience was exhausted at their impertinence, and he would desire them to be gone without further delay.

In the spring of 1807, Mr. Paine, then in his seventieth year, and but two years before his death, removed to Broome street, New York, where he lived some time. There he published his examination of the passages in the New Testament, quoted from the Old, and called Prophecies of Jesus Christ, &c., &c. It is undoubtedly a work of great merit, and indicates an honest and laborious examination of the Scriptures. Mr. Vale says Paine's Bible had every mark of being most carefully read, and annotations and notices might be seen in every page. Probably no man ever read, or so thoroughly *understood, the* merits of the book as Paine.

Mr. Paine lived afterwards in Partition street, and then in *Greenwich street.* But his sickness increasing, Madame Bon-

neville took a small house in Columbia, now Grove street, where she attended him to his death, which must have happened in about a month afterwards. He was perfectly conscious of his approaching dissolution, and endeavoured to arrange for his burial in the Quaker's burying-ground, but his request was denied.

We are also informed that about two weeks before his death, he was visited by a Presbyterian minister, of some reputation, of the name of Milledollar, as also another reverend gentleman, of the name of Cunningham. Mr. C., addressing him, said, "Mr. Paine, we visit you as friends and neighbours. You have now a full view of death. You cannot live long, and whoever does not believe in Jesus Christ will assuredly be damned." "Let me," said Paine, "have none of your popish stuff; get away with you. Good morning, good morning." Mr. Milledollar attempted to address him, but he s repulsed in similar language. When they were gone, he aid to Mrs. Hedden, his housekeeper, "Do not let them come here again; they intrude upon me." They soon renewed their visit, but Mrs. Hedden told them they could not be admitted, and that she thought the attempt useless, for if God did not change his mind, she was sure no human power could. They therefore retired.

In his last moments he was very anxious to die, and also solicitous about his place of burial; for as he was completely unchanged in his theological sentiments, he would on no account, even after death, countenance ceremonies he disapproved, containing doctrines and expressions of belief which he conscientiously objected to, and which he had spent great part of his life in combating.

He requested to see Mr. Willet Hicks, a member of the Society of *Friends, who* called on him, in accordance with his *desire and invitation.*

Mr. W. Hicks bears ample testimony to Mr. Paine's sentiments having undergone no change previous to his death, he having had a long conversation with him but a very short time before, in which he was assured that Mr. Paine's sentiments respecting the Christian religion were now precisely the same as when he wrote the Age of Reason.

We might multiply testimony to the same effect, were it needful, to almost any extent, but we content ourselves with communicating a statement of Mr. Vale's, in regard to an interview which he had with a Mr. Amasa Woodsworth, who lived next door to Mr. Paine at the time of his death, who was accustomed to visit him every day for the last six weeks before his death, frequently sat up with him, and did so on the last two nights of his life. He speaks very decidedly in regard to there being no change in the opinions of Mr. Paine previous to his death; and even his enemy, James Cheetham, describing his death, says, "On the 8th day of June, 1809, about nine in the morning, he placidly, and almost without a struggle, died as he had lived, an enemy to the Christian religion, aged seventy-two years and five months."

It is thus abundantly evident that to the last moment of his life he retained the same opinions on religious matters which he had previously advocated with so much perseverance and ability. Christians are very fond of remarking that such doctrines utterly fail to sustain the man in nature's last sad conflict; that religious dogmas and superstitions become evident truths in prospect of death, although in seasons of health and vigour they with perversity or blindness had been rejected and despised. Mr. Paine, however, exhibited not a particle of such kind of weakness, or any misgiving as to the truth of the opinions he had published to the world; although every *effort was made,* and in the most unscrupulous manner, to *obtain from him* some acknowledgment which might bear some *such construction.* His friend, Clio Richman, remarks, in

relation to this change of opinion in dying persons, "Why so much consequence should be attached to what is called a recantation in man's last moments, of a belief or opinion held through life,—a thing I never witnessed, nor knew any one who did,—it is difficult to say, at least with any credit, to those who harp so much upon it. (A belief or an opinion is none the less true or correct, even if it be recanted, and I strenuously urge the reader to reflect seriously how few there are who really have any fixed belief and conviction through life, of a metaphysical or religious nature, and not only how few there are who really have any fixed belief, or devote any time to such investigation, but who are not the creatures of form, education, and habit, and take upon trust tenets, instead of inquiring into their truth and rationality.) Indeed, it appears that those who are so loud about the recantation of philosophers, are neither religious, moral, nor correct themselves, and exhibit not in their own lives either religion in belief, or principle in conduct."

Mr. Paine not only held his opinions firmly and unshaken to the last, notwithstanding the unkind teasing and obtrusive tormenting of his Christian acquaintance, but it appears, from his "Age of Reason," that the same or similar anti-christian principles obtained their ascendancy in his mind when a mere child. He says: "From the time I was capable of receiving an idea, and acting upon it by reflection, I either doubted the truth of the Christian system, or thought it to be a strange affair, I scarcely knew which it was; but I well remember, when about seven years of age, hearing a sermon read by a relation of mine, who was a great devotee of the church, upon the subject of what is called 'Redemption by the death of the Son of God.'

"After the sermon was ended, I went into the garden, and as I was going down the garden steps, I revolted at the recol-

lection of what I heard. It was to me a serious reflection, arising from the idea I had, that God was too good to do such an action, and also too almighty to be under any necessity of doing it. I believe in the same manner to this moment. And I moreover believe that any system of religion that has anything in it that shocks the mind of a child, cannot be a true system."

Mr. Clio Richman further remarks, in relation to the works of Mr. Paine, from which we have taken the above extract, "We see through different mediums, and in our pursuits and experience are unlike. How others have felt, after reading maturely the 'Age of Reason' and the 'Rights of Man,' and pursuing fairly, coolly, and assiduously the subjects therein treated, I leave to them; but for myself, I must say, these works carried perfect conviction to my mind, and the opinions they contain are fully confirmed by much reading, by long, honest, unwearied investigation and observation."

Soon after Mr. Paine's death, the following character of him and his writings appeared in a London newspaper, written by a gentleman well acquainted with him and them:

"He was, in his youth, of a strong resolution and constant temper. He had, from almost his infancy, adopted the opinions he so successfully promulgated in his manhood. All his literary productions evince an acute, profound, and determined mind. His language is simple and nervous, adapted to all capacities, and so pointed and unequivocal that there is no misconceiving it. He is sententious, his axioms are incontrovertible and self-evident, and their impressions are indelible. No human being's efforts have done more for liberty. He has made more converts than Sydney and Russell. His 'Common Sense' enfranchised America. America was divided between two parties; the arguments of this little pamphlet decided the *contest. His glorious* Rights of Man had nearly a similar

effect in England. Innumerable replies have been made against it, but so weak and futile as to injure the cause they were meant to sustain. He reasoned from facts, and his diction was irresistible. He pours down like a torrent, and bears everything before him. He was prosecuted for his works, but they were so admired that they were in every library. He seemed stern and morose, but he was lenient, friendly, and benevolent. He instanced his humanity by his resolute vote to save the King of France, and the sanguinary Robespierre never forgave him, and in the Reign of Terror imprisoned him; but this apostle of liberty, though in such imminent danger, never retracted his opinions, nor implored mercy. It pleased Providence he should escape this monster. Bold, manly, and fearless, he never concealed his sentiments; positive and inflexible, they never varied, being founded on conviction and true principle. He remained at Paris long after Bonaparte rendered himself supreme in the State, and spoke as free as ever. In 1802, he departed from Paris for his admired America, the only true birth-place of liberty, where he finished his days in 1809, June 8, at New York, aged seventy-three—

'His ashes there,
But his fame everywhere.'"

The day after the death of Mr. Paine, he was taken from his house in New York, to his farm at New Rochelle, attended by a few friends, and was there buried. He died worth considerable property, as appears by his will, and by no means in that abject distress and destitution which the Christian community and his remorseless and unscrupulous calumniators would fain make us believe, as part of the just judgment of Almighty *God upon* him, for his rejection of the popular *religion. A plain stone* was erected to his memory, with the *following inscription* :—

THOMAS PAINE,
AUTHOR OF COMMON SENSE,
Died June 8, 1809,
Aged seventy-two years and five months.

This stone has, since its erection, suffered much injury, partly by want of care, partly by the dilapidations of time, and the violation it sustained at the hands of Mr. Cobbett, who carried the remains of Mr. Paine to England. Subsequently it has been replaced by a monument, of which the vignette on our title-page is a representation. The monument is a handsome marble structure, the work of the eminent sculptor, Mr. Frazee, and cost somewhere about thirteen hundred dollars, the contribution of various friends, who thus manifested their respect for Mr. Paine's labours, his character, and memory.

We publish below a true copy of the will we have alluded to, which we hope will be gratifying to our readers:

THE WILL OF MR. THOMAS PAINE.

"*The People of the State of New York, by the Grace of God, Free and Independent, to all to whom these presents shall come or may concern, Send Greeting:*

Know ye, That the annexed is a true copy of the will of THOMAS PAINE, deceased, as recorded in the office of our surrogate, in and for the city and county of New York. In testimony whereof, we have caused the seal of office of our said surrogate to be hereunto affixed. Witness, Silvanus Miller, Esq., surrogate of said county, at the city of New York, the twelfth day of July, in the year of our Lord one *thousand eight* hundred and nine, and of our independence *the thirty-fourth.*

SILVANUS MILLER.

The last will and testament of me, the subscriber, THOMAS PAINE, reposing confidence in my Creator God, and in no other being, for I know of no other, nor believe in any other, I Thomas Paine, of the state of New York, author of the work entitled 'Common Sense,' written in Philadelphia, in 1775, and published in that city the beginning of January, 1776, which awaked America to a Declaration of Independence on the fourth of July following, which was as fast as the work could spread through such an extensive country; author also of the several numbers of the 'American Crisis,' 'thirteen in all,' published occasionally during the progress of the revolutionary war—the last is on the peace; author also of the 'Rights of Man,' parts the first and second, written and published in London, in 1791 and '92; author also of a work on religion, 'Age of Reason,' parts the first and second. 'N. B. I have a third part by me in manuscript, and an answer to the Bishop of Landaff;' author also of a work, lately published, entitled 'Examination of the Passages in the New Testament quoted from the Old, and called Prophesies concerning Jesus Christ,' and showing there are no prophesies of any such person; author also of several other works not here enumerated, 'Dissertations on the first Principles of Government,'—'Decline and Fall of the English System of Finance,'—'Agrarian Justice,' &c., &c., make this my last will and testament, that is to say: I give and bequeath to my executors hereinafter appointed, Walter Morton and Thomas Addis Emmet, thirty shares I hold in the New York Phœnix Insurance Company, which cost me 1470 dollars, they are worth now upward of 1500 dollars, and all my movable effects, and also the money that may be in my trunk or elsewhere at the time of my decease, paying thereout the expenses of my funeral, in trust as to the said shares, movables, and money, *for Margaret Brazier* Bonneville, wife of Nicholas Bonneville *of Paris, for her* own sole and separate use, and at her or

disposal, notwithstanding her coverture. As to my farm in New Rochelle, I give, devise, and bequeath the same to my said executors, Walter Morton and Thomas Addis Emmet, and to the survivor of them, his heirs and assigns for ever, in trust, nevertheless, to sell and dispose of the north side thereof, now in the occupation of Andrew A. Dean, beginning at the west end of the orchard, and running in a line with the land sold to —— Coles, to the end of the farm, and to apply the money arising from such sale as hereinafter directed. I give to my friends Walter Morton, of the New York Phœnix Insurance Company, and Thomas Addis Emmet, counsellor-at-law, late of Ireland, two hundred dollars each, and one hundred dollars to Mrs. Palmer, widow of Elihu Palmer, late of New York, to be paid out of the money arising from said sale, and I give the remainder of the money arising from that sale, one-half thereof to Clio Rickman, of High or Upper Mary-la-bone street, London, and the other half to Nicholas Bonneville, of Paris, husband of Margaret B. Bonneville aforesaid: and as to the south part of the said farm, containing upward of one hundred acres, in trust, to rent out the same or otherwise put it to profit, as shall be found most advisable, and to pay the rents and profits thereof to the said Margaret B. Bonneville, in trust for her children, Benjamin Bonneville and Thomas Bonneville, their education and maintenance, until they come to the age of twenty-one years, in order that she may bring them well up, give them good and useful learning, and instruct them in their duty to God, and the practice of morality, the rent of the land or the interest of the money for which it may be sold, as hereinafter mentioned, to be employed in their education. And after the youngest of the said children shall have arrived at the age of *twenty-one years*, in further trust to convey the same to the *said children* share and share alike in fee-simple. But if it *shall be thought* advisable by my executors and executrix, or

the survivor or survivors of them, at any time before the youngest of the said children shall come of age, to sell and dispose of the said south side of the said farm, in that case I hereby authorize and empower my said executors to sell and dispose of the same, and I direct that the money arising from such sale be put into stock, either in the United States' Bank stock or New York Phœnix Insurance Company stock, the interest or dividends thereof to be applied as is already directed, for the education and maintenance of the said children; and the principal to be transferred to the said children or the survivor of them on his or their coming of age. I know not if the society of people called Quakers admit a person to be buried in their burying-ground, who does not belong to their society, but if they do or will admit me, I would prefer being buried there, my father belonged to that profession, and I was partly brought up in it. But if it is not consistent with their rules to do this, I desire to be buried on my farm at New Rochelle. The place where I am to be buried to be a square of twelve feet, to be enclosed with rows of trees, and a stone or post and railed fence, with a head-stone with my name and age engraved upon it, author of 'Common Sense.' I nominate, constitute, and appoint Walter Morton, of the New York Phœnix Insurance Company, and Thomas Addis Emmet, counsellor-at-law, late of Ireland, and Margaret B. Bonneville, executors and executrix to this my last will and testament, requesting them the said Walter Morton and Thomas Addis Emmet, that they will give what assistance they conveniently can to Mrs. Bonneville, and see that the children be well brought up. Thus placing confidence in their friendship, I herewith take my final leave of them and of the world. I have lived an honest and useful life to mankind; my time has been spent in *doing* good; and I die in perfect composure *and resignation to the* will of my Creator God. Dated this *eighteenth day of* January, in the year one thousand eigh

hundred and nine, and I have also signed my name to the other sheet of this will in testimony of its being a part thereof. THOMAS PAINE. (L. S.)

Signed, sealed, published, and declared by the testator, in our presence, who, at his request, and in the presence of each other, have set our names as witnesses thereto, the words 'published and declared' first interlined.

WILLIAM KEESE,
JAMES ANGEVINE,
CORNELIUS RYDER."

THOMAS PAINE'S DEATH-BED.

"We have just returned from Boston. One object of our visit to that city was to see a Mr. Amasa Woodsworth, an engineer, now retired in a handsome cottage and garden at East Cambridge, Boston. This gentleman owned the house rented by Mrs. Bonneville for Mr. Paine at his death; while he lived next door. As an act of kindness, Mr. Woodsworth visited Mr. Paine every day for six weeks before his death; he frequently sat up with him, and did so on the last two nights of his life. He was always there with Dr. Manley, the physician, and assisted in removing Mr. Paine, while his bed was prepared: he was present when Dr. Manley asked Mr. Paine 'if he wished to believe that Jesus Christ was the Son of God?' and he describes Mr. Paine's answer as animated. He says, that lying on his back, he used some action, and with much *emphasis* replied, 'I have no wish to believe on that subject.' He lived a short time after this, but was not *known to speak*, for he died tranquilly. He accounts for the *insinuating style* of Dr. Manley's letter, by stating that the *gentleman, just* after its publication, joined a church. He

informs us that he has openly reproved the doctor for the falsity contained in the *spirit of that letter*, boldly declaring before Dr. Manley, who is yet living, that nothing which he saw justified his (the doctor's) insinuations. Mr. Woodsworth assures us that he neither heard nor saw anything to justify the belief of any mental change in the opinions of Mr. Paine previous to his death; but that being very ill, and in pain, chiefly arising from the skin being removed in some parts by long lying, he was generally too uneasy to enjoy conversation on abstract subjects. This, then, is the best evidence that can be procured on this subject, and we publish it while the contravening parties are yet alive, and with the authority of Mr. Woodsworth.—G. V."

"In reviewing the life of Mr. Thomas Paine, we can see no defect in his public character. He was a citizen of the world, and served its interests to the best of his abilities, which were great. 'Where liberty is, that is my country,' said Dr. Franklin. Mr. Paine replied, 'Where liberty is *not*, that is my country,' in reference to his exertions for liberty in the United States, England, and France. Paine wrote for mankind, and he may be emphatically styled 'the friend of man.' *Here* he was a good citizen, and a firm supporter of the government; because that government is based upon the rights of man, with the exception of the recognition of slavery in the southern states, unfortunately engrafted on the community before the war of independence. Whatever may be the opinion of Mr. Paine's theological works, his honesty in publishing them cannot be doubted by any impartial reader. He believed those opinions true, and he believed the *truth* useful to mankind; while his especial object was to establish a religious principle in France, then becoming atheistical. The best argument in support of deism is to be found in the fir

part of the 'Age of Reason.' In this view of the subject, Mr. Paine ought to have been taken by the hand by every believer in the existence, wisdom, power, and goodness of one Supreme God, the Maker and Sustainer of the Universe."

MONUMENT TO THOMAS PAINE.

On the fourth of July, 1837, we visited the tomb, or place of burial of Thomas Paine, near New Rochelle, and in the Beacon of July 15, 1837, thus described it (see Beacon, Vol. I., p. 331):—

"The tomb is close by the road-side, but over a stone fence, and now consists of a low, broken, rough, dry stone wall, of oblong shape, of about eight by four feet, with loose stones, grass and earth in the centre; the upright slab simply marked with

'THOMAS PAINE, AUTHOR OF COMMON SENSE,'

no longer exists. After Cobbett violated the grave, and removed the bones from the remains of Mr. Paine, the head-stone was broken, and pieces successively removed by different visiters: one large fragment was preserved by a lady in an opposite cottage, in which Mr. Paine had sometimes boarded, and in which Mr. and Madame Bonneville afterward boarded; but this fragment gradually suffered diminution, as successive visiters begged a piece of what they could no longer steal. To preserve the last remnant, this lady has had it plastered up in a wall.

We discovered that the lady mentioned, the nearest neighbour to the tomb, would be favourable to the repair of the tomb, and we learned that she believed that such repairs *would be popular* among the neighbours; and on this under-

standing, in which we have not been deceived, we determined to commence a subscription to repair the tomb, or put up a monument; and before we left the village we obtained from Mr. James, who had then marble saw-mills in New Rochelle, a promise to be at the expense of putting up a heavy block of marble, instead of a head-stone, if purchased by subscription. Subsequently Mr. Frazee, an eminent architect, offered, in conjunction with some friends, to give the work on a monument if the materials were procured, and other expenses paid. This has now been accomplished, and paid for. The monument stands on the Paine Farm, at the head of the grave, on twenty feet square, enclosed by a substantial wall on three sides, and an iron railing in front (not yet up, March, 1841.) It is built of the marble of the country, and is valued at about thirteen hundred dollars. The following extract from a letter from the architect will best describe the monument, and the feelings of the neighbourhood, which is two miles from the village of New Rochelle.—G. V."

"New York, Nov. 12, 1839.

"To Mr. Vale:

"Will you please to inform our friends that the monument to Thomas Paine is erected? On Friday last I took with me a rigger, and went up to the quarries, and on that day we got the marble to the spot, with the machinery and other apparatus necessary to the work. At an early hour, on Saturday morning, we mustered all hands at the grave, and commenced the erection of the monument in good earnest, and in good spirits. Everything worked well, and at three o'clock P. M. the crown-piece was on, and the erection complete. No person was hurt, nor any part of the work broken or injured. The people up there say it is a chaste and beautiful structure. Its purely Grecian character and simplicity of form render its general effect *truly impressive* and interesting. The summit

is twelve and a half feet above the level of the road, at that point.

"I was much pleased to find that, among the number of fifty persons and more that were assembled to witness our labours, not an unkind look was seen, nor an unfriendly expression heard, during the time. All looked and spake as though their hearts were glad at seeing such marked regard, such noble and lasting honour paid to the GREAT PATRIOT of our revolution, and the defender of the rights of man.

"I have a little trimming to do yet on the head, which will occupy me the best part of a day; this I will endeavour to accomplish this week, when the monument will be completed.

"Very truly yours,

"JOHN FRAZEE."

LETTER FROM JOEL BARLOW TO JAMES CHEETHAM.

"SIR—I have received your letter, calling for information relative to the life of Thomas Paine. It appears to me that this is not the moment to publish the life of that man in this country. His own writings are his best life, and these are not read at present.

The greatest part of the readers in the United States will not be persuaded, as long as their present feelings last, to consider him in any other light than as a drunkard and a deist. The writer of his life who should dwell on these topics, to the exclusion of the great and estimable traits of his real character, might, indeed, please the rabble of the age who do not know him; the book might sell; but it would only tend to render the truth more obscure for the future biographer than it was before.

"But if the present writer should give us Thomas Paine *complete* in all his character, as one of the most benevolent and disinterested of mankind, endowed with the clearest perception, an uncommon share of original genius, and the greatest breadth of thought; if this piece of biography should analyze his literary labours, and rank him, as he ought to be ranked, among the brightest and most undeviating luminaries of the age in which he has lived—yet, with a mind assailable by flattery, and receiving through that weak side a tincture of vanity which he was too proud to conceal; with a mind, though strong enough to bear him up, and to rise elastic under the heaviest load of oppression, yet unable to endure the contempt of his former friends and fellow-labourers, the rulers of the country that had received his first and greatest services—a mind incapable of looking down with serene compassion, *as it ought,* on the rude scoffs of their imitators, a *new generation that* knows him not; a mind that shrinks from *their society, and* unhappily seeks refuge in low company,

looks for consolation in the sordid, solitary bottle, till it sinks at last so far below its native elevation as to lose all respect for itself, and to forfeit that of his best friends, disposing these friends almost to join with his enemies, and wish, though from different motives, that he would haste to hide himself in the grave. If you are disposed and prepared to write his life *thus entire*, to fill up the picture to which these hasty strokes of outline give but a rude sketch, with great vacuities, your book may be a useful one for another age, but it will not be relished, nor scarcely tolerated in this.

"The biographer of Thomas Paine should not forget his mathematical acquirements, and his mechanical genius. His invention of the *iron bridge*, which led him to Europe, in the year 1787, has procured him a great reputation in that branch of science, in France and England, in both which countries his bridge has been adopted in many instances, and is now much in use.

"You ask whether he took an oath of allegiance to France? Doubtless the qualification to be a member of the convention required an oath of fidelity to that country, but involved in it no abjuration of his fidelity to this. He was made a French citizen by the same decree with Washington, Hamilton, Priestley, and Sir James Mackintosh.

"What Mr. M——— has told you relative to the circumstances of his arrestation by order of Robespierre, is erroneous, at least in one point. Paine did not lodge at the house where he was arrested, but had been dining there with some Americans, of whom Mr. M——— may have been one. I never heard before that Paine was intoxicated that night. Indeed, the officers brought him directly to my house, which was two miles from his lodgings, and about as much from the place *where he had* been dining. He was not intoxicated when *they came to me.* Their object was to get me to go and assist *them to* examine Paine's papers. It employed us the rest

of that night and the whole of the next day, at Paine's lodgings; and he was not committed to prison till the next evening.

"You ask, what company he kept? He always frequented the best, both in England and France, till he became the object of calumny in certain American papers (echoes of the English court papers), for his adherence to what he thought the cause of liberty in France, till he conceived himself neglected and despised by his former friends in the United States. From that moment he gave himself very much to drink, and, consequently, to companions less worthy of his better days.

"It is said he was always a peevish inmate—this is possible. So was Lawrence Sterne, so was Torquato Tasso, so was J. J. Rousseau; but Thomas Paine, as a visiting acquaintance and as a literary friend, the only points of view in which I knew him, was one of the most instructive men I ever have known. He had a surprising memory, and brilliant fancy; his mind was a storehouse of facts and useful observations; he was full of lively anecdote, and ingenious original pertinent remark upon almost every subject.

"He was always charitable to the poor beyond his means, a sure protector and friend to all Americans in distress that he found in foreign countries. And he had frequent occasions to exert his influence in protecting them during the revolution in France. His writings will answer for his patriotism, and his entire devotion to what he conceived to be the best interest and happiness of mankind.

"This, sir, is all I have to remark on the subject you mention. Now, I have only one request to make, and that would doubtless seem impertinent were you not the editor of a newspaper. It is, that you will not publish my letter, nor permit a copy of it to be taken. "I am, sir, &c.,

"JOEL BARLOW.

Kalorama, August 11, 1809."

EPITAPH

FOR THE TOMB OF

THOMAS PAINE.

WRITTEN BY A FRIEND.

Here moulders, in this dusk abode,
One who to faith no homage showed:
By moral law his life he tried,
While social duty was his guide,
And pure philanthrophy the end
Of all he did, or could intend.

Prayer he pronounced impiety,
Vain prompter of divine decree:
That oft implores, with erring zeal,
For boons subversive of its weal:
Yet he retained a grateful sense
Of bountiful Omnipotence;
Nor blushed with reverence to own,
That blessings sprang from God alone.

Thus unappall'd, he sunk to rest,
To rise, or lie, as Heaven thought best:
Yet future hope he did not waive,
Nor mercy for transgressions crave,
The God who gave him life, will save.

MISCELLANEOUS
THEOLOGICAL WORKS
OF
THOMAS PAINE.

(71)

LETTER

TO THE HON. T. ERSKINE,

ON THE PROSECUTION OF THOMAS WILLIAMS

FOR PUBLISHING

THE AGE OF REASON.

INTRODUCTION.

It is a matter of surprise to some people to see Mr. Erskine act as counsel for a crown prosecution commenced against the right of opinion: I confess it is none to me, notwithstanding all that Mr. Erskine has said before; for it is difficult to know when a lawyer is to be believed; I have always observed that Mr. Erskine, when contending as a counsel for the right of political opinion, frequently took occasions, and those often dragged in head and shoulders, to lard what he called the British Constitution, with a great deal of praise. Yet the same Mr. Erskine said to me in conversation, were government to begin *de novo* in England, they never would establish such a damned absurdity (it was exactly his expression) as this is. Ought I then to be surprised at Mr. Erskine for inconsistency?

In this prosecution Mr. Erskine admits the right of controversy; but says the Christian religion is not to be abused. This is somewhat sophistical, because, while he admits the right of controversy, he reserves the right of calling that controversy, abuse: and thus, lawyer-like, undoes by one word what he says in the other. I will, however, in this letter keep within the limits he prescribes; he will find here nothing about the Christian religion: he will find only a statement of a few cases, which shows the necessity of examining the books, handed to us from the Jews, in order to discover if we have not been imposed upon; together with some observations on the manner in which the trial of Williams has been conducted. If Mr. Erskine denies the right of examining those books, he had better *profess himself* at once an advocate for the establishment of an Inquisition, and the re-establishment of the Star Chamber.

THOMAS PAINE.

LETTER,* &c.

Of all the tyrannies that afflict mankind, tyranny in religion is the worst: Every other species of tyranny is limited to the world we live in; but this attempts a stride beyond the grave, and seeks to pursue us into eternity. It is there and not here —it is to God and not to man—it is to a heavenly and not to an earthly tribunal that we are to account for our belief; if then we believe falsely and dishonourably of the Creator, and that belief is forced upon us, as far as force can operate by human laws and human tribunals,—on whom is the criminality of that belief to fall? on those who impose it, or on those on whom it is imposed?

A bookseller of the name of Williams, has been prosecuted in London on a charge of blasphemy, for publishing a book entitled the *Age of Reason*. Blasphemy is a word of vast sound, but equivocal and almost indefinite signification, unless we confine it to the simple idea of hurting or injuring the reputation of any one, which was its original meaning. As a word, it existed before Christianity existed, being a Greek word, or Greek anglofied, as all the etymological dictionaries will show.

But behold how various and contradictory has been the signification and application of this equivocal word. Socrates, who lived more than four hundred years before the Christian era, was convicted of blasphemy, for preaching against the belief of a plurality of gods, and for preaching the belief of one God, and was condemned to suffer death by poison. Jesus

* Mr. Paine has evidently incorporated into this letter a portion of his answer to Bishop Watson's "Apology for the Bible;" as in a subsequent chapter of that work, treating of the book of Genesis, he expressly refers to his remarks, in a preceding part of the same, on the two accounts of the creation contained in that book; which is included in this letter.

Christ was convicted of blasphemy under the Jewish law, and was crucified. Calling Mahomet an impostor would be blasphemy in Turkey; and denying the infallibility of the Pope and the Church would be blasphemy at Rome. What then is to be understood by this word blasphemy? We see that in the case of Socrates truth was condemned as blasphemy. Are we sure that truth is not blasphemy in the present day? Woe, however, be to those who make it so, whoever they may be.

A book called the Bible has been voted by men, and decreed by human laws, to be the word of God; and the disbelief of this is called blasphemy. But if the Bible be not the word of God, it is the laws and the execution of them that is blasphemy, and not the disbelief. Strange stories are told of the Creator in that book. He is represented as acting under the influence of every human passion, even of the most malignant kind. If these stories are false, we err in believing them to be true, and ought not to believe them. It is therefore a duty which every man owes to himself, and reverentially to his Maker, to ascertain, by every possible inquiry, whether there be sufficient evidence to believe them or not.

My own opinion is decidedly, that the evidence does not warrant the belief, and that we sin in forcing that belief upon ourselves and upon others. In saying this, I have no other object in view than truth. But that I may not be accused of resting upon bare assertion with respect to the equivocal state of the Bible, I will produce an example, and I will not pick and cull the Bible for the purpose. I will go fairly to the case: I will take the two first chapters of Genesis as they stand, and show from thence the truth of what I say, that is, that the evidence does not warrant the belief that the Bible is the word of God.

CHAPTER I.

1 In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.

2 And the earth was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep; and the spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.

3 And *God said,* Let there be light; and there was light.

4. *And God saw* the light, that it was good; and God divi*ded the light from* the darkness.

5 And God called the light day, and the darkness he called night: and the evening and the morning were the first day.

6 ¶ And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters.

7 And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament, from the waters which were above the firmament: and it was so.

8 And God called the firmament heaven; and the evening and the morning were the second day.

9 ¶ And God said, Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear: and it was so.

10 And God called the dry land earth, and the gathering together of the waters called he seas; and God saw that it was good.

11 And God said, let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit-tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth; and it was so.

12 And the earth brought forth grass, and herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed was in itself, after his kind: and God saw that it was good.

13 And the evening and the morning were the third day.

14 ¶ And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven, to divide the day from the night: and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years.

15 And let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven, to give light upon the earth: and it was so.

16 And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night: he made the stars also.

17 And God set them in the firmament of the heaven, to give light upon the earth,

18 And to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness; and God saw that it was good.

19 And the evening and the morning were the fourth day.

20 And God said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly *the moving creature* that hath life, and fowl that may fly *above the earth* in the open firmament of heaven.

21 And God created great whales, and every living creature *that moveth, which* the waters brought forth abundantly after

their kind, and every winged fowl after his kind; and God saw that it was good.

22 And God blessed them, saying, Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let fowl multiply in the earth.

23 And the evening and the morning were the fifth day.

24 ¶ And God said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind: and it was so.

25 And God made the beast of the earth after his kind, and cattle after their kind, and everything that creepeth upon the earth after his kind; and God saw that it was good.

26 ¶ And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.

27 *So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him: male and female created he them.*

28 *And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.*

29 ¶ And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed: to you it shall be for meat.

30 And to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to everything that creepeth upon the earth, wherein there is life, I have given every green herb for meat: and it was so.

31 And God saw everything that he had made, and behold it was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day.

CHAPTER II.

1 *Thus the heavens* and the earth were finished, and all the *host of them.*

2 And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made, and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made.

3 And God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work, which God created and made

4 ¶ These are the generations of the heavens and of the earth, when they were created; in the day that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens,

5 And every plant of the field, before it was in the earth, and every herb of the field, before it grew; for the Lord God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, *and there was not a man to till the ground.*

6 But there went up a mist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground.

7 And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.

8 And the Lord God planted a garden eastward of Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed.

9 And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil.

10 And a river went out of Eden to water the garden: and from thence it was parted, and became into four heads.

11 The name of the first is Pison: that is it which compasseth the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold.

12 And the gold of that land is good: there is bdellium and the onyx-stone.

13 And the name of the second river is Gihon: the same is it that compasseth the the whole land of Ethiopia.

14 And the name of the third river is Hiddekel: that is it which goeth toward the east of Assyria. And the fourth river is Euphrates.

15 And the Lord God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it.

16 And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of *every tree of the* garden thou mayest freely eat:

17 But of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt

not eat of it; for in the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die.

18 ¶ And the Lord God said, It is not good that the man should be alone: I will make him an help meet for him.

19 And out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air, and brought them unto Adam, to see what he would call them; and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof.

20 And Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field; but for Adam there was not found an help meet for him.

21 And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept; and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof.

22 And the rib which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man.

23 And Adam said, This is now bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of man.

24 Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife; and they shall be one flesh.

25 And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.

These two chapters are called the Mosaic account of the creation; and we are told, nobody knows by whom, that Moses was instructed by God to write that account.

It has happened that every nation of people has been world-makers; and each makes the world to begin his own way, as if they had all been brought up, as Hudibras says, to the trade. There are hundreds of different opinions and traditions how the world began.* My business, however, in this place, is only with those two chapters.

* In this world-making trade, man, of course, has held a conspicuous place; and, for the gratification of the curious inquirer, the editor subjoins two specimens of the opinions of learned men, in regard to the *manner of his* formation, and of his subsequent fall. The *first he extracts from* the Talmud, a work containing the Jewish tra*ditions, the rabbinical* constitutions, and explication of the law; an

I begin then by saying, that those two chapters, instead of containing, as has been believed, one continued account of the creation, written by Moses, contain two different and contradictory stories of a creation, made by two different persons, and written in two different styles of expression. The evi-

is of great authority among the Jews. It was composed by certain learned rabbins, comprehends twelve bulky folios, and forty years are said to have been consumed in its compilation. In fact, it is deemed to contain the *whole body of divinity* for the Jewish nation. Although the Scriptures tell us that *the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground*, they do not explain the manner in which it was done, and these doctors supply the deficiency as follows:—

"Adam's *body* was made of the earth of Babylon, his *head* of the land of Israel, his other *members* of other parts of the world. R. Meir thought he was compact of the earth, gathered out of the whole earth; as it is written, *thine eyes did see my substance.* Now it is elsewhere written, *the eyes of the Lord are over all the earth.* R. Aha expressly marks the twelve hours in wh'ch his various parts were formed. His stature was from one end of the world to the other; and it was for his transgression that the Creator, laying his hand in anger on him, lessened him; for before, says R. Eleazer, with his hand he reached the firmament. R. Jehuda thinks his sin was heresy; but R. Isaac thinks it was nourishing his foreskin."

The Mahometan savans give the following account of the same transaction:

"When God wished to create man, he sent the angel Gabriel to take a handful of each of the seven beds which composed the earth. But when the latter heard the order of God, she felt much alarmed, and requested the heavenly messenger to represent to God, that as the creature he was about to form might chance to rebel one day against him, this would be the means of bringing upon herself the divine malediction. God, however, far from listening to this request, despatched two other angels, Michael and Azrael, to execute his will; but they, moved with compassion, were prevailed upon again to lay the complaints of the earth at the feet of her author. Then God confined the execution of his commands to the formidable Azrael alone, who, regardless of all the earth might say, violently tore from her bosom seven handfuls from her various strata, and carried them into Arabia, where the work of creation was to be completed. As to Azrael, God was so well pleased with the decisive manner in which he had acted, that he gave him the office of separating the soul from the body, whence he is called the Angel of Death.

"Meanwhile, the angels having kneaded this earth, God moulded it *with his own hands*, and left it some time that it might get dry. The *angels delighted* to gaze upon the lifeless, but beautiful mass, with the *exception of Eblis*, or Lucifer, who, bent upon evil, struck it upon *the stomach*, which giving a hollow sound, he said, since this creature

dence that shows this is so clear when attended to without prejudice, that, did we meet with the same evidence in any Arabic or Chinese account of a creation, we should not hesitate in pronouncing it a forgery.

I proceed to distinguish the two stories from each other.

The first story begins at the first verse of the first chapter, and ends at the end of the third verse of the second chapter; for the adverbial conjunction, THUS, with which the second chapter begins (as the reader will see), connects itself to the

will be hollow, it will often need being filled, and will be, therefore, exposed to pregnant temptations. Upon this, he asked the angels how they would act if God wished to render them dependent upon this sovereign which he was about to give to the earth. They readily answered that they would obey; but although Eblis did not openly dissent, he resolved within himself that he would not follow their example.

"After the body of the first man had been properly prepared, God animated it with an intelligent soul, and clad him in splendid and marvellous garments, suited to the dignity of this favoured being. He now commanded his angels to fall prostrate before Adam. All of them obeyed, with the exception of Eblis, who was in consequence immediately expelled from heaven, and his place given to Adam."

The formation of Eve from one of the ribs of the first man, is the same as that recorded in the Bible, as is also the order given to the father of mankind, not to taste the fruit of a particular tree. Eblis seized this opportunity of revenge. Having associated the peacock and the serpent in the enterprise, they by their wily speeches at length persuaded Adam to become guilty of disobedience. But no sooner had they touched the forbidden fruit, than their garments dropped on the ground, and the sight of their nakedness covered them both with shame and with confusion. They made a covering for their body with fig leaves; but they were both immediately condemned to labour, and to die, and hurled down from Paradise.

Adam fell upon the mountain of Sarendip, in the island of Ceylon, where a mountain is called by his name to the present day. Eve being separated from her spouse in her fall, alighted on the spot where China now stands, and Eblis fell not far from the same spot. As to the peacock and the snake, the former dropped in Hindostan, and the latter in Arabia. Adam, soon feeling the enormity of his fault, implored the mercy of God, who relenting, sent down his angels from heaven with a tabernacle, which they placed on the spot where Abraham, at a subsequent period, built the temple of Mecca. Gabriel instructed him in the rites and ceremonies performed about the sanctuary, *in order that* he might obtain the forgiveness of his offence, *and afterwards led him* to the mountain of Ararat, where he met Eve *from whom he had been* now separated above two hundred years.

last verse of the first chapter, and those three verses belong to, and make the conclusion of the first story.

The second story begins at the fourth verse of the second chapter, and ends with that chapter. Those two stories have been confused into one, by cutting off the three last verses of the first story, and throwing them to the second chapter.

I go now to show that those stories have been written by two different persons.

From the first verse of the first chapter to the end of the 3d verse of the second chapter, which makes the whole of the first story, the word GOD is used without any epithet or additional word conjoined with it, as the reader will see: and this style of expression is invariably used throughout the whole of this story, and is repeated no less than thirty-five times, viz. "In the beginning GOD created the heavens and the earth, and the spirit of GOD moved on the face of the waters, and GOD said, let there be light, and GOD saw the light," &c. &c.

But immediately from the beginning of the fourth verse of the second chapter, where the second story begins, the style of expression is always the *Lord God*, and this style of expression is invariably used to the end of the chapter, and is repeated eleven times; in the one it is always GOD, and never the *Lord God*; in the other it is always the *Lord God*, and never GOD. —The first story contains thirty-four verses, and repeats the single word GOD thirty-five times. The second story contains twenty-two verses, and repeats the compound word *Lord-God* eleven times; this difference of style, so often repeated, and so uniformly continued, shows, that those two chapters, containing two different stories, are written by different persons: it is the same in all the different editions of the Bible, in all the languages I have seen.

Having thus shown, from the difference of style, that those two chapters, divided, as they properly divide themselves, at the end of the third verse of the second chapter, are the work of two different persons, I come to show, from the contradictory matters they contain, that they cannot be the work of one person, and are two different stories.

It is impossible, unless the writer was a lunatic, without *memory, that one* and the same person could say, as is said in *the 27th and 28th* verses of the first chapter—"So God *created man in his own image*, in the image of God created

he him; male and female created he them: and *God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowls of the air, and every living thing that moveth on the face of the earth.*" It is, I say, impossible that the same person, who said this, could afterwards say, as is said in the second chapter, ver. 5, *and there was not a man to till the ground;* and then proceed in the 7th verse to give another account of the making a man for the first time, and afterwards of the making a woman out of his rib.

Again, one and the same person could not write, as is written in the 29th verse of the first chapter: "Behold I (God) have given you every herb bearing seed, which is on the face of the earth; and every tree, in which is the fruit of a tree bearing seed, to you it shall be for meat," and afterwards say, as is said in the second chapter, that the Lord-God planted a tree in the midst of a garden, and forbad man to eat thereof.

Again, one and the same person could not say, "*Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them, and on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made;*" and shortly after set the Creator to work again, to plant a garden, to make a man and a woman, &c., as is done in the second chapter.

Here are evidently two different stories contradicting each other.—According to the first, the two sexes, the male and the female, were made at the same time. According to the second, they were made at different times; the man first, the woman afterwards.—According to the first story, they were to have dominion over all the earth. According to the second, their dominion was limited to a garden. How large a garden it could be, that one man and one woman could dress and keep in order, I leave to the prosecutor, the judge, the jury, and Mr. Erskine to determine.

The story of the talking serpent, and its tete-a-tete with Eve: the doleful adventure, called the *Fall of Man:* and how he was turned out of this fine garden, and how the garden was afterwards locked up and guarded by a flaming sword (if any one can tell what a flaming sword is), belong altogether to the *second story.* They have no connexion with the first *story.* According to the first, there was no garden of Eden

no forbidden tree: the scene was the whole earth, and the fruit of all the trees was allowed to be eaten.

In giving this example of the strange state of the Bible, it cannot be said I have gone out of my way to seek it, for I have taken the beginning of the book; nor can it be said I have made more of it, than it makes of itself. That there are two stories is as visible to the eye, when attended to, as that there are two chapters, and that they have been written by different persons, nobody knows by whom. If this, then, is the strange condition the beginning of the Bible is in, it leads to a just suspicion, that the other parts are no better, and consequently it becomes every man's duty to examine the case. I have done it for myself, and am satisfied that the Bible is *fabulous*.

Perhaps I shall be told in the cant-language of the day, as I have often been told by the Bishop of Llandaff and others, of the great and laudable pains, that many pious and learned men have taken to explain the obscure, and reconcile the contradictory, or as they say, the *seemingly contradictory*, passages of the Bible. It is because the Bible needs such an undertaking, that is one of the first causes to suspect it is NOT the word of God: this single reflection, when carried home to the mind, is in itself a volume.

What! does not the Creator of the Universe, the Fountain of all Wisdom, the Origin of all Science, the Author of all Knowledge, the God of Order and of Harmony, know how to write? When we contemplate the vast economy of the creation; when we behold the unerring regularity of the visible solar system, the perfection with which all its several parts revolve, and by corresponding assemblage, form a whole;—when we launch our eye into the boundless ocean of space, and see ourselves surrounded by innumerable worlds, not one of which varies from its appointed place—when we trace the power of a Creator, from a mite to an elephant—from an atom to an universe can we suppose that the mind that could conceive such a design, and the power that executed it with incomparable perfection, cannot write without inconsistency; or that a book so written can be the work of such a power? The writings of Thomas *Paine, even of Thomas* Paine, need no commentator to explain, *expound, arrange*, and re-arrange their several parts, to render *them intelligible*—he can relate a fact, or write an essay

without forgetting in one page what he has written in another —certainly, then, did the God of all perfection condescend to write or dictate a book, that book would be as perfect as himself is perfect: the Bible is not so, and it is confessedly not so, by the attempts to amend it.

Perhaps I shall be told, that though I have produced one instance, I cannot produce another of equal force. One is sufficient to call in question the genuineness or authenticity of any book that pretends to be the word of God; for such a book would, as before said, be as perfect as its author is perfect.

I will, however, advance only four chapters further into the book of Genesis, and produce another example that is sufficient to invalidate the story to which it belongs.

We have all heard of Noah's Flood; and it is impossible to think of the whole human race, men, women, children, and infants (except one family) deliberately drowning, without feeling a painful sensation; that heart must be a heart of flint that can contemplate such a scene with tranquillity. There is nothing in the ancient mythology, nor in the religion of any people we know of upon the globe, that records a sentence of their God, or of their Gods, so tremendously severe and merciless. If the story be not true, we blasphemously dishonour God by believing it, and still more so, in forcing, by laws and penalties, that belief upon others. I go now to show from the face of the story, that it carries the evidence of not being true.

I know not if the judge, the jury, and Mr. Erskine, who tried and convicted Williams, ever read the Bible, or know anything of its contents, and therefore I will state the case precisely.

There were no such people as Jews or Israelites, in the time that Noah is said to have lived, and consequently there was no such law as that which is called the Jewish or Mosaic law. It is, according to the Bible, more than six hundred years from the time the flood is said to have happened, to the time of Moses, and consequently the time the flood is said to have happened, was more than six hundred years prior to the law called the law of Moses, even admitting Moses to have been the giver of that law, of which there is great cause to doubt.

We have here two different epochs, or points of time; that of the flood, and that of the law of Moses; the former mo

than six hundred years prior to the latter. But the maker of the story of the flood, whoever he was, has betrayed himself by blundering, for he has reversed the order of the times. He has told the story, as if the law of Moses was prior to the flood; for he has made God to say to Noah, Genesis, chap. vii. ver. 2, "Of every clean beast, thou shalt take unto thee by sevens, male and his female, and of beasts that are *not clean* by two, the male and his female." This is the Mosaic law, and could only be said after that law was given, not before. There was no such things as beasts clean and unclean in the time of Noah.—It is nowhere said they were created so.—They were only *declared* to be so, *as meats*, by the Mosaic law, and that to the Jews only, and there was no such people as Jews in the time of Noah. This is the blundering condition in which this strange story stands.

When we reflect on a sentence so tremendously severe, as that of consigning the whole human race, eight persons excepted, to deliberate drowning; a sentence, which represents the Creator in a more merciless character than any of those whom we call Pagans, ever represented the Creator to be, under the figure of any of their deities, we ought at least to suspend our belief of it, on a comparison of the beneficent character of the Creator, with the tremendous severity of the sentence; but when we see the story told with such an evident contradiction of circumstances, we ought to set it down for nothing better than a Jewish fable, told by nobody knows whom, and nobody knows when.

It is a relief to the genuine and sensible soul of man to find the story unfounded. It frees us from two painful sensations at once; that of having hard thoughts of the Creator, on account of the severity of the sentence; and that of sympathizing in the horrid tragedy of a drowning world. He who cannot feel the force of what I mean, is not, in my estimation of character, worthy the name of a human being.

I have just said there is great cause to doubt, if the law, called the law of Moses, was given by Moses; the books, called the books of Moses, which contain among other things, what is called the Mosaic law, are put in front of the Bible, in the *manner of a constitution*, with a history annexed to it. Had *these books been* written by Moses, they would undoubtedly *have been the oldest* books in the Bible, and entitled to be

placed first, and the law and the history they contain, would be frequently referred to in the books that follow; but this is not the case. From the time of Othniel, the first of the judges, (Judges, chap. iii. ver. 9.) to the end of the book of Judges, which contains a period of four hundred and ten years, this law, and those books, were not in practice, nor known among the Jews, nor are they so much as alluded to throughout the whole of that period. And if the reader will examine the 22d and 23d chapters of the 2d book of Kings, and 34th chapter 2d Chron. he will find that no such law, nor any such books, were known in the time of the Jewish monarchy, and that the Jews were Pagans during the whole of that time, and of their judges.

The first time the law, called the law of Moses, made its appearance, was in the time of Josiah, about a thousand years after Moses was dead; it is then said to have been found by accident. The account of this finding, or pretended finding, is given, 2d Chron. chap. xxxiv. ver. 14, 15, 16, 18: "Hilkiah the priest *found* the book of the law of the Lord, given by Moses; and Hilkiah answered and said to Shaphan the scribe, I have found the book of the law in the house of the Lord; and Hilkiah delivered the book to Shaphan, and carried the book to the king, and Shaphan told the king (Josiah), saying, Hilkiah the priest hath given me a book."

In consequence of this finding, which much resembles that of poor Chatterton finding manuscript poems of Rowley the Monk in the Cathedral church at Bristol, or the late finding of manuscripts of Shakspeare in an old chest (two well known frauds), Josiah abolished the Pagan religion of the Jews, massacred all the Pagan priests, though he himself had been a Pagan, as the reader will see in the 23d chap. 2d Kings, and thus established in blood, the law that is there called the law of Moses, and instituted a passover in commemoration thereof. The 22d ver. speaking of this passover, says, "Surely there was not holden such a passover from the days of the judges, that judged Israel, nor, in all the days of the kings of Israel, nor the kings of Judah;" and the 25th verse in speaking of this priest-killing Josiah, says, "*Like unto him there was no king before him*, that turned to the Lord with all *his heart, and with* all his soul, and with all his might, *according to all the* law of Moses; *neither after him arose there*

any like him." This verse, like the former one, is a declaration against all the preceding kings without ex It is also a declaration against all that reigned after which there were four, the whole time of whose reignir but twenty-two years and six months, before the Je entirely broken up as a nation and their monarchy d It is therefore evident that the law, called the law o of which the Jews talk so much, was promulgated a lished only in the latter time of the Jewish monarch is very remarkable, that no sooner had they estab than they were a destroyed people, as if they were for acting an imposition and affixing the name of the it, and massacreing their former priests under the pre religion. The sum of the history of the Jews is th continued to be a nation about a thousand years, t established a law, which they called the *law of the Lo by Moses*, and were destroyed. This is not opinion, torical evidence.

Levi the Jew, who has written an answer to the *Reason*, gives a strange account of the law called th Moses.

In speaking of the story of the sun and moon stand that the Israelites might cut the throats of all their and hang all their kings, as told in Joshua, ch. x., "There is also another proof of the reality of this which is, the appeal that the author of the book o makes to the book of Jasher—'*Is not this written in of Jasher?*' Hence," continues Levi, "it is mani the book commonly called the book of Jasher, existed well known at the time the book of Joshua was writt pray, Sir," continues Levi, "what book do you think *why, no other than the law of Moses!*"—Levi, like th of Llandaff, and many other guess-work commentato forgets, or does not know, what there is in one pa Bible, when he is giving his opinion upon another pa

I did not, however, expect to find so much ignor Jew with respect to the history of his nation, though not be surprised at it in a Bishop. If Levi will look *account given* in the first chap. 2d book of Samue *Amalekite slaying* Saul, and bringing the crown and to *David, he will* find the following recital, ver. 1

"And David called one of the young men, and said, Go near and fall upon him (the Amalekite), and he smote him that he died: and David lamented with this lamentation over Saul, and over Jonathan his son; also he bade them teach the children the use of the bow;—*behold, it is written in the book of Jasher.*" If the book of Jasher were what Levi calls it, the law of Moses, written by Moses, it is not possible that anything that David said or did, could be written in that law, since Moses died more than five hundred years before David was born; and on the other hand, admitting the book of Jasher to be the law called the law of Moses; that law must have been written more than five hundred years after Moses was dead, or it could not relate anything said or done by David. Levi may take which of these cases he pleases, for both are against him.

I am not going in the course of this letter to write a commentary on the Bible. The two instances I have produced, and which are taken from the beginning of the Bible, show the necessity of examining it. It is a book that has been read more, and examined less, than any book that ever existed. Had it come to us an Arabic or Chinese book, and said to have been a sacred book by the people from whom it came, no apology would have been made for the confused and disorderly state it is in. The tales it relates of the Creator would have been censured, and our pity excited for those who believed them. We should have vindicated the goodness of God against such a book, and preached up the disbelief of it out of reverence to him. Why then do we not act as honourably by the Creator in the one case as we would do in the other? As a Chinese book we would have examined it;—ought we not then to examine it as a Jewish book? The Chinese are a people who have all the appearance of far greater antiquity than the Jews, and in point of permanency there is no comparison. They are also a people of mild manners and of good morals, except where they have been corrupted by European commerce. Yet we take the word of a restless, bloody-minded people, as the Jews of Palestine were, when we would reject the same authority from a better people. We ought to see it is habit and prejudice that have prevented people from examining the Bible. Those of the Church of England call it holy, because the Jews called it so, and because custom and certain acts of

parliament call it so, and they read it from custom. Dissenters read it for the purpose of doctrinal controversy, and are very fertile in discoveries and inventions. But none of them read it for the pure purpose of information, and of rendering justice to the Creator, by examining if the evidence it contains warrants the belief of its being what it is called. Instead of doing this, they take it blindfolded, and will have it to be the word of God whether it be so or not. For my own part, my belief in the perfection of the Deity will not permit me to believe that a book so manifestly obscure, disorderly, and contradictory, can be his work. I can write a better book myself. (This disbelief in me proceeds from my belief in the Creator.) I cannot pin my faith upon the *say so* of Hilkiah the priest, who said he found it, or any part of it, nor upon Shaphan the scribe, nor upon any priests, nor any scribe or man of the law of the present day.

As to acts of parliament, there are some that say there are witches and wizards; and the persons who made those acts (it was in the time of James the First), made also some acts which call the Bible the Holy Scriptures, or Word of God. But acts of parliament decide nothing with respect to God; and as these acts of parliament makers were wrong with respect to witches and wizards, they may also be wrong with respect to the book in question.* It is therefore necessary

* It is afflicting to humanity to reflect that, after the blood shed to establish the *divinity* of the Jewish scriptures, it should have become necessary to grant a new *dispensation*, which, through unbelief and conflicting opinions respecting its true construction, has cost as great or greater sacrifices than the former. Catholics, when they had the ascendency, burnt Protestants, who, in turn, led Catholics to the stake, and both united in exterminating Dissenters. The Dissenters, when they had the power, pursued the same course. The diabolical act of Calvin, in the burning of Dr. Servetus, is an awful witness of this fact. Servetus suffered two hours in a slow fire before life was extinct. The Dissenters, who escaped from England, had scarcely seated themselves in the wilds of America, before they began to exterminate from the territory they seized upon, all those who did not profess what they called the *orthodox faith*. Priests, Quakers, and Adamites, were prohibited from entering the territory, on pain of *death*. By priests, they meant clergymen of the Roman Catholic, if *not also* the Protestant or Episcopal persuasion. Their own priests they denominated ministers. These puritans also, particularly in the province of Massachusetts Bay, put many persons to death on the

that the book be examined; it is our duty to examine it; and to suppress the right of examination is sinful in any government, or in any judge or jury. The Bible makes God to say

charge of witchcraft. There is no account however of their having burned any alive, as was done in Scotland, about the same period in which the executions took place in Massachusetts Bay. In England, Sir Matthew Hale, a judge, eminent for *extraordinary piety*, condemned two women to death on the same charge.

I doubt, however, if there be any acts of the parliament now in force for inflicting pains and penalties for denying the scriptures to be the word of God; as our *upright* judges seem to rely at this time wholly upon, what they call, the common law to justify the horrid persecutions which are now carried on in England, to the disgrace of a country that boasts so much of its tolerant spirit.

As the common law is derived from the customs of our ancestors, when in a rude and barbarous condition, it is not surprising that many of its injunctions should be opposed to the ideas, which a society in a civilized and refined state should deem compatible with justice and right. Accordingly we find that government has from time to time annulled some of its most prominent absurdities; such as the trials by ordeal, the wager of battle in case of appeal for murder, under a belief that a supernatural power would interfere to save the innocent and destroy the guilty in such a combat, &c. Yet much remains nearly as ridiculous, that requires a further and more liberal use of the pruning knife.

"In the days of the Stewarts (A. D. 1670, 22d year of Charles II. See the Republican, vol. 5, p. 22), William Penn was indicted at Common Law for a riot and breach of the peace, on having delivered his sentiments to a congregation of people, in Grace-church-street: he told the judge and the jury that Common Law was an abuse, and no law at all; and in spite of the threats, the fines, and imprisonments inflicted on his jury, they acquitted him on this plea. William Penn found an honest jury."

The introduction however of Christianity, as composing a part of this Common Law (bad as much of it is), is proved to be a fraud or misconception of the old Norman French; as I shall show by an extract of a letter from the celebrated American statesman, Thomas Jefferson, to our worthy Major Cartwright, bearing date 5th June, 1824.

[For a more full developement of this subject, see Sampson's Anniversary Discourse, before the Historical Society of New York. —EDITOR.]

Extract from Jefferson's letter.

"I am glad to find in your book (The English Constitution, produced and illustrated) a formal contradiction, at length, of the judiciary usurpation of legislative power; for such the judges have *usurped in their repeated* decisions, that *Christianity is a part of the common law. The proof of* the contrary, which you have adduced, is

to Moses, Deut. chap. vii. ver. 2, "And when the Lord thy God shall deliver them before thee, thou shalt smite them, and utterly destroy them, thou shalt make no covenant with

incontrovertible: to wit, that the common law existed while the Anglo-Saxons were yet Pagans; at a time when they had never yet heard the name of Christ pronounced, or knew that such a character had ever existed. But it may amuse you to show when, and by what means, they stole this law in upon us. In a case of Quare Impedit, in the year book, 34 Henry VI. fo. 38. [1458,] a question was made how far the Ecclesiastical law was to be respected in a common law court? and Prisot, C. J., gave his opinion in these words:—'A tiel les que ils de saint eglise ont en *ancien scripture*, covient a nous a donner credence: car ceo Commen Ley sur quels touts manners leis sont fonddes. Et auxy, Sir, nous sumus obliges de conustre lour ley de saint eglise: et semblabement ils sont obliges de conustre nostre ley—Et, Sir, si poit apperer or a nous que l'evesque adfait come un ordinary fera en tiel cas, adorez nous devons ceo adjudger bon, ou auterment nemy?' &c. [To such laws as they have of the ancient scriptures, it behooves us to give credence: for it is that common law upon which all kinds of law are founded; and therefore, sir, are we bound to know their law of holy church, and in like manner are they obliged to know our laws. And, sir, if it should appear now to us, that the Bishop had done what an ordinary ought to do in like case, then we should adjudge it good, and not otherwise.†]

"See G. C. Fitz. abr. qu. imp. 89. Bro. abr. qu. imp. 12. Finch in his 1st Book, c. 3, is the first afterwards who quotes the case, and misstates it thus, 'to such laws of the church as have warrant in *Holy Scripture*, our law giveth credence,' and cites Prisot: mistranslating '*ancient* Scripture' into '*holy* scripture;' whereas Prisot palpably says, 'to such laws as those of holy church have in *ancient writing* it is proper for us to give credence; to wit, their *ancient written* laws.' This was in 1613, a century and a half after the dictum of Prisot. Wingate, in 1658, erects this false translation into a maxim of the common law, copying the words of Finch, but citing Prisot. Wingate, max. 3, and Sheppard, tit. 'Religion,' in 1675 copies the same mistranslation, quoting the Y. 13, Finch and Wingate. Hale expresses it in these words; 'Christianity is parcel of the law of England'—1 Ventris 293, 3 Keb. 607, but quotes no authority. By these echoings and re-echoings from one to another, it had become so established in 1723, that in the case of the King v. Woolston, 2 Stra. 834, the court would not suffer it to be debated, whether to write against Christianity was punishable in the temporal court at common law. Wood, therefore, 409, ventures still to vary the phrase, and says, 'that all *blasphemy* and profaneness are offences by the common law,' and *cites 2 Stra.*—then Blackstone, in 1773, iv. 59, repeats the words of *Hale, that* 'Christianity is part of the law of England,' citing Ventris *and Strange*; and finally, Lord Mansfield, with a little qualification

them, *nor show mercy unto them.*" Not all the priests, nor scribes, nor tribunals in the world, nor all the authority of man, shall make me believe that God ever gave such a *Robespierean precept* as that of showing *no mercy;* and consequently it is impossible that I, or any person who believes as reverentially of the Creator as I do, can believe such a book to be the word of God.

There have been, and still are those, who whilst they *profess* to believe the Bible to be the word of God, affect to turn it into ridicule. Taking their profession and conduct together, they act blasphemously: because they act as if *God himself* was not to be believed. The case is exceedingly different with respect to the *Age of Reason.* That book is written to show from the Bible itself, that there is abundant matter to suspect it is not the word of God, and that we have been imposed upon, first by Jews, and afterwards by priests and commentators.

Not one of those who have attempted to write answers to the *Age of Reason,* have taken the ground upon which only an answer could be written. The case in question is not upon any point of doctrine, but altogether upon a matter of fact. Is the book called the Bible the word of God, or is it not? If

in Evan's case in 1767, says, that 'the essential principles of *revealed* religion are parts of the common law;' thus ingulfing Bible, Testament, and all into the common law, without citing any authority; and thus we find this chain of authorities hanging, link by link, one upon another, and all ultimately on one and the same hook; and *that,* a mistranslation of the words '*ancient scripture,*' used by Prisot. Finch quotes Prisot; Wingate does the same; Sheppard quotes Prisot, Finch, and Wingate; Hale cites nobody; the court in Woolston's case, cites Hale; Wood cites Woolston's case; Blackstone quotes Woolston's case and Hale; and Lord Mansfield, like Hale, ventures it on his own authority. Here I might defy the best read lawyer to produce another scrap of authority for this *judiciary forgery;* and I might go on further to show how some of the Anglo-Saxon priests interpolated into the text of Alfred's laws the 20th, 21st, 22d, and 23d chapters of Exodus, and the 15th of the Acts of the Apostles, from the 23d to the 29th verses; but this would lead my pen, and your patience, too far. What a conspiracy this, between church and state!!!"

[† *The canons of the church anciently were* incorporated with the Laws *of the land, and of the same authority.* See Dr. Henry's Hist. G. *Britain.—Editor.*]

it can be proved to be so, it ought to be believed as such; if not, it ought not to be believed as such. This is the true state of the case. The *Age of Reason* produces evidence to show, and I have in this letter produced additional evidence, that it is not the word of God. Those who take the contrary side, should prove that it is. But this they have not done, nor attempted to do, and consequently they have done nothing to the purpose.

The prosecutors of Williams have shrunk from the point, as the answers have done. They have availed themselves of prejudice instead of proof. If a writing was produced in a court of judicature, said to be the writing of a certain person, and upon the reality or non-reality of which, some matter at issue depended, the point to be proved would be, that such writing was the writing of such person. Or if the issue depended upon certain words, which some certain person was said to have spoken, the point to be proved would be, that such words were spoken by such person; and Mr. Erskine would contend the case upon this ground. A certain book is said to be the word of God. What is the proof that it is so? for upon this the whole depends; and if it cannot be proved to be so, the prosecution fails for want of evidence.

The prosecution against Williams charges him with publishing a book, entitled *The Age of Reason*, which it says, is an impious, blasphemous pamphlet, tending to ridicule and bring into contempt the Holy Scriptures. Nothing is more easy than to find abusive words, and English prosecutions are famous for this species of vulgarity. The charge, however, is sophistical; for the charge, as growing out of the pamphlet, should have stated, not as it now states, to ridicule and bring into contempt the Holy Scriptures, but to show, that the book called the Holy Scriptures are not the Holy Scriptures. It is one thing if I ridicule a work as being written by a certain person; but it is quite a different thing if I write to prove that such work was not written by such person. In the first case, I attack the person through the work; in the other case, I defend the honour of the person against the work. This is what the *Age of Reason* does, and consequently the charge in the indictment is sophistically stated. Every one will admit, *that if the Bible be not* the word of God, we err in believing *it to be his word*, and ought not to believe it. Certainly, then, *the ground the prosecution* should take, would be to prove that

the Bible is in fact what it is called. But this the prosecution has not done, and cannot do.

In all cases the prior fact must be proved, before the subsequent facts can be admitted in evidence. In a prosecution for adultery, the fact of marriage, which is the prior fact, must be proved before the facts to prove adultery can be received. If the fact of marriage cannot be proved, adultery cannot be proved; and if the prosecution cannot prove the Bible to be the word of God, the charge of blasphemy is visionary and groundless.

In Turkey they might prove, if the case happened, that a certain book was bought of a certain bookseller, and that the said book was written against the Koran. In Spain and Portugal they might prove, that a certain book was bought of a certain bookseller, and that the said book was written against the infallibility of the Pope. Under the ancient mythology they might have proved, that a certain writing was bought of a certain person, and that the said writing was written against the belief of a plurality of Gods, and in the support of the belief of one God. Socrates was condemned for a work of this kind.

All these are but subsequent facts, and amount to nothing, unless the prior facts be proved. The prior fact, with respect to the first case is, Is the Koran the word of God? With respect to the second, Is the infallibility of the Pope a truth? With respect to the third, Is the belief of a plurality of Gods a true belief? and in like manner with respect to the present prosecution, Is the book called the Bible the word of God? If the present prosecution prove no more than could be proved in any or all of these cases, it proves only as they do, or as an inquisition would prove; and in this view of the case, the prosecutors ought at least to leave off reviling that infernal institution, the inquisition. The prosecution, however, though it may injure the individual, may promote the cause of truth; because the manner in which it has been conducted, appears a confession to the world, that there is no evidence to prove that the Bible is the word of God. On what authority then do we believe the many strange stories that the Bible tells of God?

This prosecution has been carried on through the medium of what *is called a special* jury, and the whole of a special

jury is nominated by the master of the crown office. Mr. Erskine vaunts himself upon the bill he brought into parliament, with respect to trials, for what the government party calls libels. But if in crown prosecutions, the master of the crown office is to continue to appoint the whole special jury, which he does by nominating the forty-eight persons from which the solicitor of each party is to strike out twelve, Mr. Erskine's bill is only vapour and smoke. The root of the grievance lies in the manner of forming the jury, and to this Mr. Erskine's bill applies no remedy.

When the trial of Williams came on, only eleven of the special jurymen appeared, and the trial was adjourned. In cases where the whole number do not appear, it is customary to make up the deficiency by taking jurymen from persons present in the court. This, in the law term, is called a *Tales*. Why was not this done in this case? Reason will suggest, that they did not choose to depend on a man accidentally taken. When the trial re-commenced, the whole of the special jury appeared, and Williams was convicted: it is folly to contend a cause where the whole jury is nominated by one of the parties. I will relate a recent case that explains a great deal with respect to special juries in crown prosecutions.

On the trial of Lambert and others, printers and proprietors of the *Morning Chronicle*, for a libel, a special jury was struck, on the prayer of the Attorney-General, who used to be called *Diabolus Regis*, or King's Devil.

Only seven or eight of the special jury appeared, and the Attorney-General not praying a *Tales*, the trial stood over to a future day; when it was to be brought on a second time, the Attorney-General prayed for a new special jury, but as this was not admissible, the original special jury was summoned. Only eight of them appeared, on which the Attorney-General said, "As I cannot, on a second trial, have a special jury, I will pray a *Tales*." Four persons were then taken from the persons present in court, and added to the eight special jurymen. The jury went out at two o'clock to consult on their verdict, and the Judge (Kenyon) understanding they were divided, and likely to be some time in making up their minds, *retired from* the bench, and went home. At seven the jury *went, attended by* an officer of the court, to the Judge's house, *and delivered* a verdict, "*Guilty of* publishing, but with no

ous intention." The Judge said, *"I cannot record rdict; it is no verdict at all."* The jury withdrew, er sitting in consultation till five in the morning, brought rdict, Not Guilty. Would this have been the case, had ey been all special jurymen nominated by the Master Crown-office? This is one of the cases that ought to ie eyes of people with respect to the manner of forming juries.

he trial of Williams, the Judge prevented the counsel defendant proceeding in the defence. The prosecution lected a number of passages from the Age of Reason, erted them in the indictment. The defending counsel lecting other passages to show, that the passages in the ient were conclusions drawn from premises, and unfairly ed therefrom in the indictment. The Judge said, *he know how to act;* meaning thereby whether to let the proceed in the defence or not, and asked the jury if ished to hear the passages read which the defending had selected. The jury said NO, and the defending was in consequence silent. Mr. Erskine then, Falstaff ving all the field to himself, and no enemy at hand, out him most heroically, and the jury found the defend- *lty.* I know not if Mr. Erskine ran out of court and d, huzza for the Bible and the trial by jury.

spierre caused a decree to be passed during the trial of and others, that after a trial had lasted three days, (the f which time, in the case of Brissot, was taken up by the ting party) the judge should ask the jury (who were packed jury) if they were satisfied? If the jury said ie trial ended, and the jury proceeded to give their without hearing the defence of the accused party. s no depth of wisdom to make an application of this

I now state a case to show that the trial of Williams is not according to Kenyon's own explanation of law.

late trial in London (Selthens *versus* Hoossman) on a f insurance, one of the jurymen, Mr. Dunnage, after one side of the case, and without hearing the other t up and said, *it was as legal a policy of insurance as s written.* The Judge, who was the same as presided *rial of Williams,* replied, *that it was a great misfor-*

tune when any gentleman of the jury makes up his mind on a cause before it was finished. Mr. Erskine, who in that case was counsel for the defendant (in this he was against the defendant) cried out, *it is worse than a misfortune, it is a fault.* The Judge, in his address to the jury in summing up the evidence, expatiated upon, and explained the parts which the law assigned to the counsel on each side, to the witnesses, and to the Judge, and said, "*When all this was done,* and not until then, *it was the business of the jury to declare what the justice of the case was; and that it was extremely rash and imprudent in any man to draw a conclusion before all the premises were laid before them, upon which that conclusion was to be grounded.*" According then to Kenyon's own doctrine, the trial of Williams is an irregular trial, the verdict an irregular verdict, and as such is not recordable.

As to special juries, they were but modern; and were instituted for the purpose of determining cases at *law* between merchants; because, as the method of keeping merchants' accounts differs from that of common tradesmen, and their business, by lying much in foreign bills of exchange, insurance, &c., is of a different description to that of common tradesmen, it might happen that a common jury might not be competent to form a judgment. The law that instituted special juries, makes it necessary that the jurors be *merchants*, or of the degree of *squires*. A special jury in London is generally composed of merchants; and in the country of men called country squires, that is, fox-hunters, or men qualified to hunt foxes. The one may decide very well upon a case of pounds, shillings, and pence, or of the counting-house; and the other of the jockey-club or the chase. But who would not laugh, that because such men can decide such cases, they can also be jurors upon theology? Talk with some London merchants about scripture, and they will understand you mean *scrip*, and tell you how much it is worth at the Stock Exchange. Ask them about theology, and they will say, they know of no such gentleman upon 'Change. Tell some country squires of the sun and moon standing still, the one on the top of a hill and the other in a valley, and they will swear it is a lie of one's own making. Tell them that God Almighty ordered a man to *make a cake and bake* it with a t—d and eat it, and they will *say it is one of Dean* Swift's blackguard stories. Tell them

it is in the Bible, and they will lay a bowl of punch it is not, and leave it to the parson of the parish to decide. Ask *them* also about theology, and they will say, they know of no such one on the turf. An appeal to such juries serves to bring the Bible into more ridicule than any thing the author of the *Age of Reason* has written; and the manner in which the trial has been conducted shows, that the prosecutor dares not come to the point, nor meet the defence of the defendant. But all other cases apart, on what ground of right, otherwise than on the right assumed by an inquisition, do such prosecutions stand? Religion is a private affair between every man and his Maker, and no tribunal or third party has a right to interfere between them. It is not properly a thing of this world; it is only practised in this world; but its object is in a future world; and it is no otherwise an object of just laws, than for the purpose of protecting the equal rights of all, however various their beliefs may be. If one man choose to believe the book called the Bible to be the word of God, and another, from the convinced idea of the purity and perfection of God, compared with the contradictions the book contains—from the lasciviousness of some of its stories, like that of Lot getting drunk and debauching his two daughters, which is not spoken of as a crime, and for which the most absurd apologies are made —from the immorality of some of its precepts, like that of showing no mercy—and from the total want of evidence on the case, thinks he ought not to believe it to be the word of God, each of them has an equal right; and if the one has a right to give his reasons for believing it to be so, the other has an equal right to give his reasons for believing the *contrary*. Anything that goes beyond this rule is an inquisition. Mr. Erskine talks of his moral education; Mr. Erskine is very little acquainted with theological subjects, if he does not know there is such a thing as a *sincere* and *religious* belief that the Bible is not the word of God. This is my belief; it is the belief of thousands far more learned than Mr. Erskine; and it is a belief that is every day increasing. It is not infidelity, as Mr. Erskine profanely and abusively calls it: it is the direct reverse of infidelity. It is a pure religious belief, founded on the idea of the perfection of the Creator. If the Bible be the word of God, it needs not the wretched aid of prosecutions to support it; and you might with as much *propriety* make a law to protect the sunshine, as

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to protect the Bible, if the Bible, like the sun, be the work of God. We see that God takes good care of the Creation he has made. He suffers no part of it to be extinguished: and he will take the same care of his word, if he ever *gave one*. But men ought to be reverentially careful and suspicious how they ascribe books to him as his *word* which from this confused condition would dishonour a common scribbler, and against which there is abundant evidence, and every cause to suspect imposition. Leave then the Bible to itself. God will take care of it if he has anything to do with it, as he takes care of the sun and the moon, which need not your laws for their better protection. As the two instances I have produced in the beginning of this letter, from the book of Genesis, the one respecting the account called the Mosaic account of the Creation, the other of the Flood, sufficiently show the necessity of examining the Bible, in order to ascertain what degree of evidence there is for receiving or rejecting it as a sacred book; I shall not add more upon that subject; but in order to show Mr. Erskine that there are religious establishments for public worship which make no profession of faith of the books called holy scriptures, nor admit of priests, I will conclude with an account of a society lately begun in Paris, and which is very rapidly extending itself.

The society takes the name of Theophilantropes, which would be rendered in English by the word Theophilanthropists, a word compounded of three Greek words, signifying God, Love, and Man. The explanation given to this word is, *Lovers of God and Man*, or *Adorers of God and Friends of Man*, adorateurs de Dieu et amis des hommes. The society proposes to publish each year a volume, entitled, Anne Religieuse des Theophilanthropes, Religious year of the Theophilanthropists: the first volume is just published, entitled

RELIGIOUS YEAR OF THE THEOPHILANTHROPISTS,

OR

ADORERS OF GOD, AND FRIENDS OF MAN.

Being a collection of the discourses, lectures, hymns, and canticles, for all the religious and moral festivals of the Theo*philanthropists during* the course of the year, whether in their

public temples or in their private families, published by the author of the Manuel of the Theophilanthropists.

The volume of this year, which is the first, contains 214 pages duodecimo.

The following is the table of contents:—

1. Precise history of the Theophilanthropists.
2. Exercises common to all the festivals.
3. Hymn, No. I. God of whom the universe speaks.
4. Discourse upon the existence of God.
5. Ode II. The heavens instruct the earth.
6. Precepts of wisdom, extracted from the book of the Adorateurs.
7. Canticle, No. III. God Creator, soul of nature.
8. Extracts from divers moralists upon the nature of God, and upon the physical proofs of his existence.
9. Canticle, No. IV. Let us bless at our waking the God who gives us light.
10. Moral thoughts extracted from the Bible.
11. Hymn, No. V. Father of the universe.
12. Contemplation of nature on the first days of the spring.
13. Ode, No. VI. Lord in thy glory adorable.
14. Extracts from the moral thoughts of Confucius.
15. Canticle in praise of actions, and thanks for the works of the creation.
16. Continuation from the moral thoughts of Confucius.
17. Hymn, No. VII. All the universe is full of thy magnificence.
18. Extracts from an ancient sage of India upon the duties of families.
19. Upon the spring.
20. Moral thoughts of divers Chinese authors.
21. Canticle, No. VIII. Everything celebrate the glory of the eternal.
22. Continuation of the moral thoughts of Chinese authors.
23. Invocation for the country.
24. Extracts from the moral thoughts of Theognis.
25. Invocation, Creator of man.
26. Ode, No. IX. Upon Death.
27. Extracts from the book of the Moral Universal, upon happiness.
28. Ode, No. X. Supreme Author of Nature.

for everything he *disbelieves*, as well as for those he *believes*; and where this cannot be done with safety, the government is a despotism, and the church an inquisition.

It is more than three years since the first part of the *Age of Reason* was published, and more than a year and a half since the publication of the second part: the Bishop of Llandaff undertook to write an answer to the second part; and it was not until after it was known that the author of the *Age of Reason* would reply to the Bishop, that the prosecution against the book was set on foot; and which is said to be carried on by some clergy of the English church. If the Bishop is one of them, and the object be to prevent an exposure of the numerous and gross errors he has committed in his work (and which he wrote when report said that Thomas Paine was dead), it is a confession that he feels the weakness of his cause, and finds himself unable to maintain it. In this case he has given me a triumph I did not seek, and Mr. Erskine, the herald of the prosecution, has proclaimed it.

THOMAS PAINE.

A

DISCOURSE

Delivered to the Society of Theophilanthropists, at Paris.

RELIGION has two principal enemies, Fanaticism and Infidelity, or that which is called Atheism. The first requires to be combated by reason or morality, the other by natural philosophy.

The existence of a God is the first dogma of the Theophilanthropists. It is upon this subject that I solicit your attention: for though it has been often treated of, and that most sublimely, the subject is inexhaustible; and there will always remain something to be said that has not been before advanced. I go therefore to open the subject, and to crave your attention to the end.

The universe is the Bible of a true Theophilanthropist. It is there that he reads of God. It is there that the proofs of his existence are to be sought and to be found. As to written or printed books, by whatever name they are called, they are the works of man's hands, and carry no evidence in themselves that God is the author of any of them. It must be in something that man could not make, that we must seek evidence for our belief, and that something is the universe; the true Bible; the inimitable work of God.

Contemplating the universe, the whole system of creation, in this point of light, we shall discover that all that which is called natural philosophy is properly a divine study. It is the study of God through his works. It is the best study, by which we can arrive at a knowledge of his existence, and the only one by which we can gain a glimpse of his perfection.

Do we want to contemplate his power? We see it in the immensity of the creation. Do we want to contemplate his wisdom? We see it in the unchangeable order by wh

the incomprehensible WHOLE is governed. Do we want to contemplate his munificence? We see it in the abundance with which he fills the earth. Do we want to contemplate his mercy? We see it in his not withholding that abundance even from the unthankful. In fine, do we want to know what God is? Search not written or printed books, but the scripture called the *Creation*.

It has been the error of the schools to teach astronomy, and all the other sciences, and subjects of natural philosophy, as accomplishments only; whereas they should be taught theologically, or with reference to the Being who is the author of them: for all the principles of science are of divine orgin. Man cannot make, or invent, or contrive principles. He can only discover them; and he ought to look through the discovery to the author.

When we examine an extraordinary piece of machinery, an astonishing pile of architecture, a well executed statue, or an highly finished painting, where life and action are imitated, and habit only prevents our mistaking a surface of light and shade for cubical solidity, our ideas are naturally led to think of the extensive genius and talents of the artist. When we study the elements of geometry, we think of Euclid. When we speak of gravitation, we think of Newton. How then is it, that when we study the works of God in the creation, we stop short, and do not think of God? It is from the error of the schools in having taught those subjects as accomplishments only, and thereby separated the study of them from the Being who is the author of them.

The schools have made the study of theology to consist in the study of opinions in written or printed books; whereas theology should be studied in the works or book of the Creation. The study of theology in books of opinions has often produced fanaticism, rancour, and cruelty of temper; and from hence have proceeded the numerous persecutions, the fanatical quarrels, the religious burnings and massacres, that have desolated Europe. But the study of theology in the works of the Creation produces a direct contrary effect. The mind becomes at once enlightened and serene; a copy of the scene it beholds; information and adoration go hand in hand; and all the social faculties become enlarged.

The evil that has resulted from the error of the schools, in

teaching natural philosophy as an accomplishment only, has been that of generating in the pupils a species of Atheism. Instead of looking through the works of the creation to the Creator himself, they stop short, and employ the knowledge they acquire to create doubts of his existence. They labour with studied ingenuity to ascribe everything they behold to innate properties of matter; and jump over all the rest, by saying, that matter is eternal.

Let us examine this subject; it is worth examining; for if we examine it through all its cases, the result will be, that the existence of a superior cause, or that which man calls God, will be discoverable by philosophical principles.

In the first place, admitting matter to have properties, as we see it has, the question still remains, how came matter by those properties? To this they will answer, that matter possessed those properties eternally. This is not solution, but assertion; and to deny it is equally impossible of proof as to assert it. It is then necessary to go further; and therefore I say, if there exists a circumstance that is *not* a property of matter, and without which the universe, or, to speak in a limited degree, the solar system, composed of planets and a sun, could not exist a moment; all the arguments of Atheism, drawn from properties of matter, and applied to account for the universe, will be overthrown, and the existence of a superior cause, or that which man calls God, becomes discoverable, as is before said, by natural philosophy.

I go now to show that such a circumstance exists, and what it is:

The universe is composed of matter, and as a system is sustained by motion. Motion is *not a property* of matter, and without this motion, the solar system could not exist. Were motion a property of matter, that undiscovered and undiscoverable thing called perpetual motion would establish itself. It is because motion is not a property of matter that perpetual motion is an impossibility in the hand of every being but that of the Creator of motion. When the pretenders to Atheism can produce perpetual motion, and not till then, they may expect to be credited.

The natural state of matter, as to place, is a state of rest. Motion or change of place, is the effect of an external cause acting upon matter. As to that faculty of matter that is

called gravitation, it is the influence which two or more bodies have reciprocally on each other to unite and be at rest. Everything which has hitherto been discovered with respect to the motion of the planets in the system, relates only to the laws by which motion acts, and not to the cause of motion. Gravitation, so far from being the cause of motion to the planets that compose the solar system, would be the destruction of the solar system, were revolutionary motion to cease; for as the action of spinning upholds a top, the revolutionary motion upholds the planets in their orbits, and prevents them from gravitating and forming one mass with the sun. In one sense of the word, philosophy knows, and Atheism says, that ter is in perpetual motion. But motion here refers to the *state* of matter, and that only on the surface of the earth. It is either decomposition, which is continually destroying the form of bodies of matter, or re-composition, which renews that matter in the same or another form, as the decomposition of animal or vegetable substances enters into the composition of other bodies. But the motion that upholds the solar system is of an entire different kind, and is not a property of matter. It operates also to an entire different effect. It operates to *perpetual preservation*, and to prevent *any change* in the state of the system.

Giving then to matter all the properties which philosophy knows it has, or all that Atheism ascribes to it, and can prove, and even supposing matter to be eternal, it will not account for the system of the universe, or of the solar system, because it will not account for motion, and it is motion that preserves it. When, therefore, we discover a circumstance of such immense importance, that without it the universe could not exist, and for which neither matter, nor any, nor all the properties of matter cannot account; we are by necessity forced into the rational and comfortable belief of the existence of a cause superior to matter, and that cause man calls God.

As to that which is called nature, it is no other than the laws by which motion and action of every kind, with respect to unintelligible matter, is regulated. And when we speak of looking through nature up to nature's God, we speak philosophically the same rational language as when we speak of looking through human laws up to the power that ordained *them*.

God is the power or first cause, nature is the law, and matter is the subject acted upon.

But infidelity, by ascribing every phenomenon to properties of matter, conceives a system for which it cannot account, and yet it pretends to demonstration. It reasons from what it sees on the surface of the earth, but it does not carry itself on the solar system existing by motion. It sees upon the surface a perpetual decomposition and recomposition of matter. It sees that an oak produces an acorn, an acorn an oak, a bird an egg, an egg a bird, and so on. In things of this kind it sees something which it calls natural cause, but none of the causes it sees is the cause of that motion which preserves the solar system.

Let us contemplate this wonderful and stupendous system consisting of matter and existing by motion. It is not matter in a state of rest, nor in a state of decomposition or recomposition. It is matter systematized in perpetual orbicular or circular motion. As a system that motion is the life of it, as animation is life to an animal body; deprive the system of motion, and, as a system, it must expire. Who then breathed into the system the life of motion? What power impelled the planets to move, since motion is not a property of the matter of which they are composed? If we contemplate the immense velocity of this motion, our wonder becomes increased, and our adoration enlarges itself in the same proportion. To instance only one of the planets, that of the earth we inhabit, its distance from the sun, the centre of the orbits of all the planets, is, according to observations of the transit of the planet Venus, about one hundred million miles; consequently, the diameter of the orbit or circle in which the earth moves round the sun, is double that distance; and the measure of the circumference of the orbit, taken as three times its diameter, is six hundred million miles. The earth performs this voyage in 365 days and some hours, and consequently moves at the rate of more than one million six hundred thousand miles every twenty-four hours.

Where will infidelity, where will Atheism find cause for this astonishing velocity of motion, never ceasing, never varying, and which is the preservation of the earth in its orbit? It is not by reasoning from an acorn to an oak, or from any change in the state of matter on the surface of the earth, that this

can be accounted for. Its cause is not to be found in matter, nor in anything we call nature. The Atheist who affects to reason, and the fanatic who rejects reason, plunge themselves alike into inextricable difficulties. The one perverts the sublime and enlightening study of natural philosophy into a deformity of absurdities by not reasoning to the end. The other loses himself in the obscurity of metaphysical theories, and dishonours the Creator, by treating the study of his works with contempt. The one is a half-rational of whom there is some hope, the other a visionary to whom we must be charitable.

When at first thought we think of a Creator, our ideas appear to us undefined and confused; but if we reason philosophically, those ideas can be easily arranged and simplified. *It is a Being whose power is equal to his will.* Observe the nature of the will of man. It is of an infinite quality. We cannot conceive the possibility of limits to the will. Observe on the other hand, how exceedingly limited is his power of acting compared with the nature of his will. Suppose the power equal to the will, and man would be a God. He would will himself eternal, and be so. He could will a creation and could make it. In this progressive reasoning, we see in the nature of the will of man, half of that which we conceive in thinking of God; add the other half, and we have the whole idea of a being who could make the universe, and sustain it by perpetual motion; because he could create that motion.

We know nothing of the capacity of the will of animals, but we know a great deal of the difference of their powers. For example, how numerous are the degrees, and how immense is the difference of power, from a mite to a man. Since then everything we see below us shows a progression of power, where is the difficulty in supposing that there is, at the *summit of all things*, a Being in whom an infinity of power unites with the infinity of the will? When this simple idea presents itself to our mind, we have the idea of a perfect Being that man calls God.

It is comfortable to live under the belief of the existence of an infinitely protecting power; and it is an addition to that *comfort* to know, that such a belief is not a mere conceit of *the imagination*, as many of the theories that are called religions are; nor a belief founded only on tradition or received

opinion, but is a belief deducible by the action of reason upon the things that compose the system of the universe; a belief arising out of visible facts: and so demonstrable is the truth of this belief, that if no such belief had existed, the persons who now controvert it, would have been the persons who would have produced and propagated it, because by beginning to reason they would have been led on to reason progressively to the end, and thereby have discovered that matter and all the properties it has, will not account for the system of the universe, and that there must necessarily be a superior cause.

It was the excess to which imaginary systems of religion had been carried, and the intolerance, persecutions, burnings, and massacres, they occasioned, that first induced certain persons to propagate infidelity; thinking, that upon the whole, it was better not to believe at all, than to believe a multitude of things and complicated creeds, that occasioned so much mischief in the world. But those days are past; persecution has ceased, and the antidote then set up against it has no longer even the shadow of an apology. We profess and we proclaim in peace, the pure, unmixed, comfortable, and rational belief of a God, as manifested to us in the universe. We do this without any apprehension of that belief being made a cause of persecution, as other beliefs have been, or of suffering persecution ourselves. To God, and not to man, are all men to account for their belief.

It has been well observed at the first institution of this society, that the dogmas it professes to believe, are from the commencement of the world; that they are novelties, but are confessedly the basis of all systems of religion, however numerous and contradictory they may be. All men in the outset of the religion they profess are Theophilanthropists. It is impossible to form any system of religion without building upon those principles, and therefore they are not sectarian principles, unless we suppose a sect composed of all the world.

I have said in the course of this discourse, that the study of natural philosophy is a divine study, because it is the study of the works of God in the Creation. If we consider theology upon this ground, what an extensive field of improvement in things both divine and human opens itself before us. All the principles of science are of divine origin. It was not man *that invented* the principles on which astronomy, and

every branch of mathematics are founded and studied. It was not man that gave properties to the circle and triangle. Those principles are eternal and immutable. We see in them the unchangeable nature of the Divinity. We see in them immortality, and immortality existing after the material figures that express those propertiesare dissolved in dust.

The society is at present in its infancy, and its means are small; but I wish to hold in view the subject I allude to, and instead of teaching the philosophical branches of learning as ornamental accomplishments only, as they have hitherto been taught, to teach them in a manner that shall combine theological knowledge with scientific instruction; to do this to the best advantage, some instruments will be necessary for the purpose of explanation, of which the society is not yet possessed. But as the views of the society extend to public good, as well as to that of the individual, and as its principles can have no enemies, means may be devised to procure them.

If we unite to the present instruction, a series of lectures on the ground I have mentioned, we shall, in the first place, render theology the most delightful and entertaining of all studies. In the next place, we shall give scientific instruction to those who could not otherwise obtain it. The mechanic of every profession will there be taught the mathematical principles necessary to render him a proficient in his art. The cultivator will there see developed the principles of vegetation; while, at the same time, they will be led to see the hand of God in all these things.

LETTER TO CAMILLE JORDAN,

ONE OF THE COUNCIL OF FIVE HUNDRED,

OCCASIONED BY HIS REPORT ON THE PRIESTS, PUBLIC WORSHIP, AND THE BELLS.

CITIZEN REPRESENTATIVE,

As everything in your report, relating to what you call worship, connects itself with the books called the Scriptures, I begin with a quotation therefrom. It may serve to give us some idea of the fanciful origin and fabrication of those books. 2 Chronicles, chap. xxxiv. ver. 14, &c. "Hilkiah, the priest, *found* the book of the law of the Lord given by Moses. And Hilkiah, the priest, said to Shaphan, the scribe, I have found the book of the law in the house of the Lord, and Hilkiah delivered the book to Shaphan. And Shaphan, the scribe, told the king (Josiah), saying, Hilkiah, the priest, hath given me a book."

This pretended finding was about a thousand years after the time that Moses is said to have lived. Before this pretended finding there was no such thing practised or known in the world as that which is called the law of Moses. This being the case, there is every apparent evidence, that the books called the books of Moses (and which make the first part of what are called the Scriptures) are forgeries contrived between a priest and a limb of the law,* Hilkiah, and Shaphan, the scribe, a thousand years after Moses is said to have been dead.

Thus much for the first part of the Bible. Every other part is marked with circumstances equally as suspicious. We ought, therefore, to be reverentially careful how we ascribe books *as his word*, of which there is no evidence, and against

* It happens that Camille Jordan is a limb of the law.

which there is abundant evidence to the contrary, and every cause to suspect imposition.

In your report you speak continually of something by the name of worship, and you confine yourself to speak of one kind only, as if there were but one, and that one was unquestionably true.

The modes of worship are as various as the sects are numerous; and amidst all this variety and multiplicity there is but one article of belief in which every religion in the world agrees. That article has universal sanction. It is the belief of a God, or what the Greeks described by the word *Theism*, and the Latins by that of Deism. Upon this one article have been erected all the different superstructures of creeds and ceremonies continually warring with each other that now exists or ever existed. But the men most and best informed upon the subject of theology rest themselves upon this universal article, and hold all the various superstructures erected thereon to be at least doubtful, if not altogether artificial.

The intellectual part of religion is a private affair between every man and his Maker, and in which no third party has any right to interfere. The practical part consists in our doing good to each other. But since religion has been made into a trade, the practical part has been made to consist of ceremonies performed by men called Priests; and the people have been amused with ceremonial shows, processions, and bells.* By

* The precise date of the invention of bells cannot be traced. The ancients, it appears from Martial, Juvenal, Suetonius and others, had an article named tintinnabula, (usually translated bell,) by which the Romans were summoned to their baths and public places. It seems most probable, that the description of bells now used in churches, were invented about the year 400, and generally adopted before the commencement of the seventh century. Previous to their invention, however, sounding brass, and sometimes basins, were used; and to the present day the Greek church have boards, or iron plates, full of holes, which they strike with a hammer, or mallet, to summon the priests and others to divine service. We may also remark, that in our own country, it was the custom in monasteries to visit every person's cell early in the morning, and knock on the door with a similar instrument, called a wakening mallet—doubtless no very pleasing intrusion on the slumbers of the Monks.

But, the use of bells having been established, it was found that *devils were terrified* at the sound, and slunk in haste away; *in consequence of which it* was thought necessary to baptize them in a

s of this kind true religion has been banished; and such
have been found out to extract money even from the
ts of the poor, instead of contributing to their relief.
man ought to make a living by religion. It is dishonest
do. Religion is not an act that can be performed by
. One person cannot act religion for another. Every
must perform it for himself: and all that a priest can
o take from him, he wants nothing but his money, and
o riot on his spoil and laugh at his credulity.
only people, as a professional sect of Christians, who
e for the poor of their society, are people known by the
of Quakers. Those men have no priests. They assem-

manner, which appears to have been first done by Pope John
D. 968. A record of this practice still exists in the Tom of
, and the great Tom at Oxford, &c.
ng thus laid the foundation of superstitious veneration in the
of the common people, it cannot be a matter of surprise, that
ere soon used at rejoicings, and high festivals in the church
purpose of driving away any evil spirit which might be in the
urhood,) as well as on the arrival of any great personage, on
ccasion the usual fee was one penny.
ther custom remains to be explained, viz. tolling bells on the
n of any person's death, a custom which, in the manner now
d, is totally different from its original institution. It
to have been used as early as the 7th century, when bells
st generally used, and to have been denominated the soul bell,
gnified the departing of the soul,) as also, the passing bell.
heatly tells us, "Our church, in imitation of the Saints of
ages, calls in the Minister and others who are at hand, to
eir brother in his last extremity; in order to this, she directs
hould be tolled when any one is *passing* out of this life."
also says—"When any one is *dying*, bells must be tolled,
people may put up their prayers for him; let this be done
r a woman, and thrice for a man. If for a clergyman, as
mes as he had orders; and at the conclusion, a peal on all
s, to distinguish the quality of the person for whom the people
t up their prayers."—From these passages it appears evident
bell was to be tolled *before* a person's decease rather than *after*,
e present day; and that the object was to obtain the prayers
ho heard it, for the repose of the soul of their departing
r. At first, when the tolling took place after the person's
it was deemed superstitious, and was partially disused,
as found materially to affect the revenue of the church. The
od having *removed* the objection, bells were again tolled, upon
of the customary fees.—EDITOR.

ble quietly in their places of meetings, and do not disturb their neighbours with shows and noise of bells. Religion does not unite itself to show and noise. True religion is without either. Where there is both, there is no true religion.

The first object for inquiry in all cases, more especially in matters of religious concern, is TRUTH. We ought to inquire into the truth of whatever we are taught to believe, and is it certain that the books called the Scriptures stand, in this respect, in more than a doubtful predicament? They have been held in existence, and in a sort of credit among the common class of people, by art, terror, and persecution. They have little or no credit among the enlightened part, but they have been made the means of encumbering the world with a numerous priesthood, who have fattened on the labour of the people, and consumed the sustenance that ought to be applied to the widows and the poor.

It is a want of feeling to talk of priests and bells whilst so many infants are perishing in the hospitals, and aged and infirm poor in the streets, from the want of necessaries. The abundance that France produces is sufficient for every want, if rightly applied; but priests and bells, like articles of luxury, ought to be the least articles of consideration.

We talk of religion. Let us talk of truth; for that which is not truth, is not worthy the name of religion.

We see different parts of the world overspread with different books, each of which, though contradictory to the other, is said, by its partisans, to be of divine origin, and is made a rule of faith and practice. In countries under despotic governments, where inquiry is always forbidden, the people are condemned to believe as they have been taught by their priests. This was for many centuries the case in France; but this link in the chain of slavery is happily broken by the revolution; and, that it may never be riveted again, let us employ a part of the liberty we enjoy in scrutinizing into the truth. Let us leave behind us some monument, that we have made the cause and honour of our Creator an object of our care. If we have been imposed upon by the terrors of government and the artifice of priests in matters of religion, let us do justice to *our Creator* by examining into the case. His name is too *sacred to be* affixed to anything which is fabulous; and it is

our duty to inquire whether we believe, or encourage the people to believe, in fables or in facts.

It would be a project worthy the situation we are in, to invite an inquiry of this kind. We have committees for various objects; and, among others, a committee for bells. We have institutions, academies, and societies for various purposes; but we have none for inquiring into historical truth in matters of religious concern.

They show us certain books which they call the Holy Scriptures, the word of God, and other names of that kind; but we ought to know what evidence there is for our believing them to be so, and at what time they originated, and in what manner. We know that men could make books, and we know that artifice and superstition could give them a name; could call them sacred. But we ought to be careful that the name of our Creator be not abused. Let then all the evidence with respect to those books be made a subject of inquiry. If there be evidence to warrant our belief of them, let us encourage the propagation of it; but if not, let us be careful not to promote the cause of delusion and falsehood.

I have already spoken of the Quakers—that they have no priests, no bells—and that they are remarkable for their care of the poor of their society. They are equally as remarkable for the education of their children. I am a descendant of a family of that profession; my father was a Quaker; and I presume I may be admitted an evidence of what I assert. The seeds of good principles, and the literary means of advancement in the world, are laid in early life. Instead, therefore, of consuming the substance of the nation upon priests, whose life at best is a life of idleness, let us think of providing for the education of those who have not the means of doing it themselves. One good school-master is of more use than a hundred priests.

If we look back at what was the condition of France under the *ancient regime*, we cannot acquit the priests of corrupting the morals of the nation. Their pretended celibacy led them to carry debauchery and domestic infidelity into every family where they could gain admission; and their blasphemous pretensions to forgive sins, encouraged the commission of them. Why has *the Revolution* of France been stained with crimes *which the Revolution* of the United States of America was

not? Men are physically the same in all countries: it is education that makes them different. Accustom a people to believe that priests, or any other class of men, can forgive sins, and you will have sins in abundance.

I come now to speak more particularly to the object of your report.

You claim a privilege incompatible with the constitution and with rights. The constitution protects equally, as it ought to do, every profession of religion; it gives no exclusive privilege to any. The churches are the common property of all the people; they are national goods, and cannot be given exclusively to any one profession, because the right does not exist of giving to any one that which appertains to all. It would be consistent with right that the churches be sold, and the money arising therefrom be invested as a fund for the education of children of poor parents of every profession, and, if more than sufficient for this purpose, that the surplus be appropriated to the support of the aged poor. After this, every profession can erect its own place of worship, if it choose —support its own priests, if it choose to have any—or perform its worship without priests, as the Quakers do.

As to bells, they are a public nuisance. If one profession is to have bells, another has the right to use the instruments of the same kind, or any other noisy instrument. Some may choose to meet at the sound of cannon, another at the beat of drum, another at the sound of trumpets, and so on, until the whole becomes a scene of general confusion. But if we permit ourselves to think of the state of the sick, and the many sleepless nights and days they undergo, we shall feel the impropriety of increasing their distress by the noise of bells, or any other noisy instruments.

Quiet and private domestic devotion neither offends nor incommodes anybody; and the constitution has wisely guarded against the use of externals. Bells come under this descriptions and public procession, still more so—Streets and highways are for the accommodation of persons following their several occupations, and no sectary has a right to incommode them —If any one has, every other has the same; and the meeting *of various* and contradictory processions would be tumultuous. *Those who formed* the constitution had wisely reflected upon *these cases;* and, whilst they were careful to preserve the

equal right of every one, they restrained every one from giving offence, or incommoding another.

Men who, through a long and tumultuous scene, have lived in retirement, as you have done, may think, when they arrive at power, that nothing is more easy than to put the world to rights in an instant; they form to themselves gay ideas at the success of their projects; but they forget to contemplate the difficulties that attend them, and the dangers with which they are pregnant. Alas! nothing is so easy as to deceive one's self. Did all men think as you think, or as you say, your plan would need no advocate, because it would have no opposer; but there are millions who think differently to you, and who are determined to be neither the dupes nor the slaves of error or design.

It is your good fortune to arrive at power, when the sunshine of prosperity is breathing forth after a long and stormy night. The firmness of your colleagues, and of those you have succeeded—the unabated energy of the Directory, and the unequalled bravery of the armies of the Republic, have made the way smooth and easy to you. If you look back at the difficulties that existed when the constitution commenced, you cannot but be confounded with admiration at the difference between that time and now. At that moment, the Directory were placed like the forlorn hope of an army, but you were in safe retirement. They occupied the post of honourable danger, and they have merited well of their country.

You talk of justice and benevolence, but you begin at the wrong end. The defenders of your country, and the deplorable state of the poor, are objects of prior consideration to priests and bells and gaudy processions.

You talk of peace, but your manner of talking of it embarrasses the Directory in making it, and serves to prevent it. Had you been an actor in all the scenes of government from its commencement, you would have been too well informed to have brought forward projects that operate to encourage the enemy. When you arrived at a share in the government, you found everything tending to a prosperous issue. A series of victories unequalled in the world, and in the obtaining of which you had no share, preceded your arrival. Every enemy but one was subdued; and that one (the Hanoverian government of England), deprived of every hope, and a bankrupt in all

its resources, was suing for peace. In such a state of things, no new question that might tend to agitate and anarchise the interior, ought to have had place; and the project you propose, tends directly to that end.

Whilst France was a monarchy, and under the government of those things called kings and priests, England could always defeat her; but since France has RISEN TO BE A REPUBLIC, the GOVERNMENT OF ENGLAND crouches beneath her, so great is the difference between a government of kings and priests, and that which is founded on the system of representation. But, could the government of England find a way, under the sanction of your report, to inundate France with a flood of emigrant priests, she would find also the way to domineer as before; she would retrieve her shattered finances at your expense, and the ringing of the bells would be the tocsin of your downfall.

Did peace consist in nothing but the cessation of war, it would not be difficult; but the terms are yet to be arranged; and those terms will be better or worse, in proportion as France and her councils be united or divided. That the government of England counts much upon your report, and upon others of a similar tendency, is what the writer of this letter, who knows that government well, has no doubt. You are but new on the theatre of government, and you ought to suspect yourself of misjudging; the experience of those who have gone before you, should be of some service to you.

But if, in consequence of such measures as you propose, you put it out of the power of the Directory to make a good peace, and to accept of terms you would afterwards reprobate, it is yourselves that must bear the censure.

You conclude your report by the following address to your colleagues:—

"Let us hasten, representatives of the people! to affix to these tutelary laws the seal of our unanimous approbation. All our fellow-citizens will learn to cherish political liberty from the enjoyment of religious liberty: you will have broken the most powerful arm of your enemies; you will have surrounded this assembly with the most impregnable rampart—confidence, and the people's love. O! my colleagues! how *desirable is that* popularity which is the offspring of good *laws! What a* consolation it will be to us hereafter, when

returned to our own firesides, to hear from the mouths of our fellow-citizens, these simple expressions—*Blessings reward you, men of peace! you have restored to us our temples—our ministers—the liberty of adoring the God of our fathers; you have recalled harmony to our families—morality to our hearts: you have made us adore the legislature and respect all its laws!"*

Is it possible, citizen-representative, that you can be serious in this address? Were the lives of the priests under the *ancient regime* such as to justify anything you say of them? Were not all France convinced of their immorality? Were they not considered as the patrons of debauchery and domestic infidelity, and not as the patrons of morals? What was their pretended celibacy but perpetual adultery? What was their blasphemous pretensions to forgive sins, but an encouragement to the commission of them, and a love for their own? Do you want to lead again into France all the vices of which they have been the patrons, and to overspread the republic with English pensioners? It is cheaper to corrupt than to conquer; and the English government, unable to conquer, will stoop to corrupt. Arrogance and meanness, though in appearance opposite, are vices of the same heart.

Instead of concluding in the manner you have done, you ought rather to have said,

"O! my colleagues! we are arrived at a glorious period—a period that promises more than we could have expected, and all that we could have wished. Let us hasten to take into consideration the honours and rewards due to our brave defenders. Let us hasten to give encouragement to agriculture and manufactures, that commerce may reinstate itself, and our people have employment. Let us review the condition of the suffering poor, and wipe from our country the reproach of forgetting them. Let us devise means to establish schools of instruction, that we may banish the ignorance that the ancient regime of kings and priests had spread among the people—Let us propagate morality, unfettered by superstition—Let us cultivate justice and benevolence, that the God of our fathers may bless us. The helpless infant and the aged poor cry to us to remember them—Let not wretchedness be seen in our streets—Let France exhibit to the world the glorious example of *expelling ignorance* and misery together.

"Let these, my virtuous colleagues! be the subject of our care, that, when we return among our fellow-citizens, they may say, *Worthy representatives! you have done well. You have done justice and honour to our brave defenders. You have encouraged agriculture—cherished our decayed manufactures —given new life to commerce, and employment to our people. You have removed from our country the reproach of forgetting the poor—You have caused the cry of the orphan to cease—You have wiped the tear from the eye of the suffering mother—You have given comfort to the aged and infirm— You have penetrated into the gloomy recesses of wretchedness, and have banished it. Welcome among us, ye brave and virtuous representatives! and may your example be followed by your successors!*"

THOMAS PAINE.

Paris, 1797.

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AN

EXAMINATION

OF THE

PASSAGES IN THE NEW TESTAMENT,

QUOTED FROM THE OLD

AND CALLED

PROPHECIES CONCERNING JESUS CHRIST.

TO WHICH IS PREFIXED,

AN ESSAY ON DREAM.

ALSO,

AN APPENDIX,

CONTAINING THE

CONTRADICTORY DOCTRINES BETWEEN MATTHEW AND MARK;

AND MY

"PRIVATE THOUGHTS ON A FUTURE STATE."

PREFACE.

TO THE MINISTERS AND PREACHERS OF ALL DENOMINATIONS OF RELIGION.

It is the duty of every man, as far as his ability extends, to detect and expose delusion and error. But nature has not given to every one a talent for the purpose; and among those to whom such a talent is given, there is often a want of disposition or of courage to do it.

The world, or more properly speaking, that small part of it called Christendom, or the Christian World, has been amused for more than a thousand years with accounts of Prophecies in the Old Testament, about the coming of the person called Jesus Christ, and thousands of sermons have been preached, and volumes written to make man believe it.

In the following treatise, I have examined all the passages in the New Testament, quoted from the Old, and called prophecies concerning Jesus Christ, and I find no such thing as a prophecy of any such person, and I deny there are any. The passages all relate to circumstances the Jewish nation was in at the time they were written or spoken, and not to anything that was or was not to happen in the world several hundred years afterwards; and I have shown what the circumstances were, to which the passages apply or refer. I have given chapter and verse for everything I have said, and have not gone out of the books of the Old and New Testament for evidence that the passages are not prophecies of the person called Jesus Christ.

The prejudice of unfounded belief often degenerates into the prejudice of custom, and becomes, at last, rank hypocrisy. When men, from custom or fashion, or any worldly motive, profess or pretend to believe what they do not believe, nor can give any reason for believing, they unship the helm of their morality; and being no longer honest to their own

minds, they feel no moral difficulty in being unjust to others. It is from the influence of this vice, hypocrisy, that we see so many Church and Meeting-going professors and pretenders to religion, so full of trick and deceit in their dealings, and so loose in the performance of their engagements, that they are not to be trusted farther than the laws of the country will bind them. Morality has no hold on their minds, no restraint on their actions.

One set of preachers make salvation to consist in believing. They tell their congregations, that if they believe in Christ, their sins shall be forgiven. This, in the first place, is an encouragement to sin, in a similar manner as when a prodigal young fellow is told his father will pay all his debts, he runs into debt the faster, and becomes the more extravagant: Daddy, says he, pays all, and on he goes. Just so in the other case, *Christ pays all*, and on goes the sinner.

In the next place, the doctrine these men preach is not true. The New Testament rests itself for credibility and testimony on what are called prophecies in the Old Testament, of the person called Jesus Christ; and if there are no such thing as prophecies of any such person in the Old Testament, the New Testament is a forgery of the councils of Nice and Laodicea, and the faith founded thereon, delusion and falsehood.*

Another set of preachers tell their congregations that God predestinated and selected from all eternity, a certain number to be saved, and a certain number to be damned eternally. If this were true, *the day of judgment* IS PAST: *their preaching* is in vain, and they had better work at some useful calling for their livelihood.

This doctrine, also, like the former, hath a direct tendency to demoralize mankind. Can a bad man be reformed by telling him that if he is one of those who was decreed to be damned before he was born, his reformation will do him no good; and if he was decreed to be saved, he will be saved whether he believes it or not; for this is the result of the doc-

* The councils of Nice and Laodicea were held about 350 years after the time Christ is said to have lived; and the books that now compose the New Testament, were then voted for by YEAS and NAYS, as we now vote a law. A great many that were offered had a *majority of nays*, and were rejected. This is the way the New Testament came into being.

trine. Such preaching and such preachers do injury to the moral world. They had better be at the plough.

As in my political works my motive and object have been to give man an elevated sense of his own character, and free him from the slavish and superstitious absurdity of monarchy and hereditary government, so in my publications on religious subjects my endeavours have been directed to bring man to a right use of the reason that God has given him; to impress on him the great principles of divine morality, justice, mercy, and a benevolent disposition to all men, and to all creatures, and to inspire in him a spirit of trust, confidence, and consolation in his Creator, unshackled by the fables of books pretending to be *the word of God.*

THOMAS PAINE

AN ESSAY ON DREAM.

As a great deal is said in the New Testament about dreams, it is first necessary to explain the nature of dream, and to show by what operation of the mind a dream is produced during sleep. When this is understood we shall be the better enabled to judge whether any reliance can be placed upon them; and consequently, whether the several matters in the New Testament related of dreams deserve the credit which the writers of that book and priests and commentators ascribe to them.

In order to understand the nature of dreams, or of that which passes in ideal vision during a state of sleep, it is first necessary to understand the composition and decomposition of the human mind.

The three great faculties of the mind are IMAGINATION, JUDGMENT, and MEMORY. Every action of the mind comes under one or other of these faculties. In a state of wakefulness, as in the day-time, these three faculties are all active; but that is seldom the case in sleep, and never perfectly; and this is the cause that our dreams are not so regular and rational as our waking thoughts.

The seat of that collection of powers or faculties, that constitute what is called the mind, is in the brain. There is not, and cannot be, any visible demonstration of this anatomically, but accidents happening to living persons, show it to be so. An injury done to the brain by a fracture of the skull will sometimes change a wise man into a childish idiot; a being without mind. But so careful has nature been of that *sanctum sanctorum* of man, the brain, that of all the external accidents to which humanity is subject, this happens the most seldom. But we often see it happening by long and habitual intemperance.

Whether those three faculties occupy distinct apartments

of the brain, is known only to that Almighty power that formed and organized it. We can see the external effects of muscular motion in all the members of the body, though its *primum mobile*, or first moving cause, is unknown to man. Our external motions are sometimes the effect of intention, and sometimes not. If we are sitting and intend to rise, or standing and intend to sit, or to walk, the limbs obey that intention as if they heard the order given. But we make a thousand motions every day, and that as well waking as sleeping, that have no prior intention to direct them. Each member acts as if it had a will or mind of its own. Man governs the whole when he pleases to govern, but in the interims the several parts, like little suburbs, govern themselves without consulting the sovereign.

But all these motions, whatever be the generating cause, are external and visible. But with respect to the brain, no ocular observation can be made upon it. All is mystery; all is darkness in that womb of thought.

Whether the brain is a mass of matter in continual rest; whether it has a vibrating pulsative motion, or a heaving and falling motion, like matter in fermentation; whether different parts of the brain have different motions according to the faculty that is employed, be it the imagination, the judgment, or the memory, man knows nothing of it. He knows not the cause of his own wit. His own brain conceals it from him.

Comparing invisible by visible things, as metaphysical can sometimes be compared to physical things, the operations of those distinct and several faculties have some resemblance to the mechanism of a watch. The main spring which puts all in motion, corresponds to the imagination; the pendulum or balance, which corrects and regulates that motion, corresponds to the judgment; and the hand and dial, like the memory, record the operations.

Now in proportion as these several faculties sleep, slumber, or keep awake, during the continuance of a dream, in that proportion the dream will be reasonable or frantic, remembered or forgotten.

If there is any faculty in mental man that never sleeps, it is that volatile thing the imagination: the case is different with the judgment and memory. The sedate and sober constitution of the judgment easily disposes it to rest; and as to

the memory, it records in silence, and is active only when it is called upon.

That the judgment soon goes to sleep may be perceived by our sometimes beginning to dream before we are fully asleep ourselves. Some random thought runs in the mind, and we start, as it were, into recollection that we are dreaming between sleeping and waking.

If the judgment sleeps whilst the imagination keeps awake, the dream will be a riotous assemblage of mis-shapen images and ranting ideas, and the more active the imagination is, the wilder the dream will be. The most inconsistent and the most impossible things will appear right; because that faculty, whose province it is to keep order, is in a state of absence. The master of the school is gone out, and the boys are in an uproar.

If the memory sleeps, we shall have no other knowledge of the dream than that we have dreamt, without knowing what it was about. In this case it is sensation, rather than recollection, that acts. The dream has given us some sense of pain or trouble, and we feel it as a hurt, rather than remember it as a vision.

If memory only slumbers, we shall have a faint remembrance of the dream, and after a few minutes it will sometimes happen that the principal passages of the dream will occur to us more fully. The cause of this is, that the memory will sometimes continue slumbering or sleeping after we are awake ourselves, and that so fully, that it may, and sometimes does happen, that we do not immediately recollect where we are, nor what we have been about, or have to do. But when the memory starts into wakefulness, it brings the knowledge of these things back upon us, like a flood of light, and sometimes the dream with it.

But the most curious circumstance of the mind in a state of dream, is the power it has to become the agent of every person, character and thing, of which it dreams. It carries on conversation with several, asks questions, hears answers, gives and receives information, and it acts all these parts itself.

But however various and eccentric the imagination may be *in the creation* of images and ideas, it cannot supply the *place of memory*, with respect to things that are forgotten

when we are awake. For example, if we have forgotten the name of a person, and dream of seeing him and asking him his name, he cannot tell it; for it is ourselves asking ourselves the question.

But though the imagination cannot supply the place of real memory, it has the wild faculty of counterfeiting memory. It dreams of persons it never knew, and talks with them as if it remembered them as old acquaintances. It relates circumstances that never happened, and tells them as if they had happened. It goes to places that never existed, and knows where all the streets and houses are, as if it had been there before. The scenes it creates often appear as scenes remembered. It will sometimes act a dream within a dream, and, in the delusion of dreaming, tell a dream it never dreamed, and tell it as if it was from memory. It may also be remarked, that the imagination in a dream, has no idea of time, *as time*. It counts only by circumstances; and if a succession of circumstances pass in a dream that would require a great length of time to accomplish them, it will appear to the dreamer that a length of time equal thereto has passed also.

As this is the state of the mind in dream, it may rationally be said that every person is mad once in twenty-four hours, for were he to act in the day as he dreams in the night, he would be confined for a lunatic. In a state of wakefulness, those three faculties being all alive, and acting in union, constitute the rational man. In dreams it is otherwise, and therefore that state which is called insanity, appears to be no other than a disunion of those faculties, and a cessation of the judgment, during wakefulness, that we so often experience during sleep; and idiocy, into which some persons have fallen, is that cessation of all the faculties of which we can be sensible, when we happen to wake before our memory.

In this view of the mind, how absurd is it to place reliance upon dreams, and how much more absurd to make them a foundation for religion; yet the belief that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, begotten by the Holy Ghost, a being never heard of before, stands on the story of an old man's dream. "*And behold the angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not thou to take unto thee Mary thy wife, for that which is* conceived in her is of *the Holy Ghost.*"—Matt. ch. i. ver. 20.

After this we have the childish stories of three or four other dreams; about Joseph going into Egypt; about his coming back again; about this, and about that, and this story of dreams has thrown Europe into a dream for more than a thousand years. All the efforts that nature, reason, and conscience have made to awaken man from it, have been ascribed by priestcraft and superstition to the workings of the devil, and had it not been for the American revolution, which by establishing the *universal right of conscience*, first opened the way to free discussion, and for the French revolution which followed, this religion of dreams had continued to be preached, and that after it had ceased to be believed. Those who preached it and did not believe it, still believed the delusion necessary. They were not bold enough to be honest, nor honest enough to be bold.

[Every new religion, like a new play, requires a new apparatus of dresses and machinery, to fit the new characters it creates. The story of Christ in the New Testament brings a new being upon the stage, which it calls the Holy Ghost; and the story of Abraham, the father of the Jews, in the Old Testament, gives existence to a new order of beings it calls Angels.—There was no Holy Ghost before the time of Christ, nor Angels before the time of Abraham.—We hear nothing of these winged gentlemen, till more than two thousand years, according to the Bible chronology, from the time they say the heavens, the earth, and all therein were made:—After this, they hop about as thick as birds in a grove:—The first we hear of pays his addresses to Hagar in the wilderness; then three of them visit Sarah; another wrestles a fall with Jacob; and these birds of passage having found their way to earth and back, are continually coming and going. They eat and drink, and up again to heaven.—What they do with the food they carry away, the Bible does not tell us.—Perhaps they do as the birds do. * * * * * *

One would think that a system loaded with such gross and vulgar absurdities as scripture religion is, could never have obtained credit; yet we have seen what priestcraft and fanaticism could do, and credulity believe.

From angels in the Old Testament, we get to prophets, to *witches, to seers* of visions, and dreamers of dreams, and *sometimes we are told*, as in 2 Sam.-chap. ix. ver. 15, that God whis-

pers in the ear—At other times we are not told how the impulse was given, or whether sleeping or waking—In 2 Sam. chap. xxiv. ver. 1, it is said, "*And again the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel, and he moved David against them to say, Go number Israel and Judah.*"—And in 1 Chro. chap. xxi. ver. 1, when the same story is again related, it is said, "*and Satan stood up against Israel, and moved David to number Israel.*"

Whether this was done sleeping or waking, we are not told, but it seems that David, whom they call "a man after God's own heart," did not know by what spirit he was moved; and as to the men called inspired penmen, they agree so well about the matter, that in one book they say that it was God, and in the other that it was the Devil.

The idea that writers of the Old Testament had of a God was boisterous, contemptible, and vulgar.—They make him the Mars of the Jews, the fighting God of Israel, the conjuring God of their Priests and Prophets.—They tell as many fables of him as the Greeks told of Hercules. * * *

They make their God to say exultingly, "*I will get me honour upon Pharaoh, and upon his Host, upon his Chariots and upon his Horsemen.*"—And that he may keep his word, they make him set a trap in the Red Sea, in the dead of the night, for Pharaoh, his host, and his horses, and drown them as a rat-catcher would do so many rats—Great honour indeed! the story of Jack the Giant-killer is better told!

They pit him against the Egyptian magicians to conjure with him; the three first essays are a dead match—Each party turns his rod into a serpent, the rivers into blood, and creates frogs; but upon the fourth, the God of the Israelites obtains the laurel, he covers them all over with lice!—The Egyptian magicians cannot do the same, and this lousy triumph proclaims the victory!

They make their God to rain fire and brimstone upon Sodom and Gomorrah, and belch fire and smoke upon Mount Sinai, as if he was the Pluto of the lower regions. They make him salt up Lot's wife like pickled pork; they make him pass like Shakspeare's Queen Mab into the brain of their priests, prophets, and prophetesses, and tickle them into dreams, and after making him play all kind of tricks, they confound him with Satan, and *leave us at a loss to know what God they meant!*

This is the descriptive God of the Old Testament; and as to the New, though the authors of it have varied the scene, they have continued the vulgarity.

Is man ever to be the dupe of priestcraft, the slave of superstition? Is he never to have just ideas of his Creator? It is better not to believe there is a God, than to believe of him falsely. When we behold the mighty universe that surrounds us, and dart our contemplation into the eternity of space, filled with innumerable orbs, revolving in eternal harmony, how paltry must the tales of the Old and New Testaments, profanely called the word of God, appear to thoughtful man! The stupendous wisdom, and unerring order, that reign and govern throughout this wondrous whole, and call us to reflection, *put to shame the Bible!*—The God of eternity, and of all that is real, is not the God of passing dreams, and shadows of man's imagination! The God of truth, is not the God of fable; the belief of a God begotten and a God crucified, is a God blasphemed——It is making a profane use of reason.]*

I shall conclude this Essay on Dream with the two first verses of the 34th chapter of Ecclesiasticus, one of the books of the Apocrypha.

"*The hopes of a man void of understanding are vain and false: and dreams lift up fools—Whoso regardeth dreams is like him that catcheth at a shadow, and followeth after the wind.*"

I now proceed to an examination of the passages in the Bible, called prophecies of the coming of Christ, and to show there are no prophecies of any such person. That the passages clandestinely styled prophecies are not prophecies, and that they refer to circumstances the Jewish nation was in at the time they were written or spoken, and not to any distance of future time or person.

* Mr. Paine must have been in an ill humour when he wrote the passage enclosed in crotchets; and probably on reviewing it, and discovering exceptionable clauses, was induced to reject the whole, as it does not appear in the edition published by himself. But having obtained the original in the hand-writing of Mr. P. and deeming some of the remarks worthy of being preserved, I have thought proper to restore the passage, with the exception of the objectionable parts.—EDITOR.

AN

EXAMINATION

OF THE

PASSAGES IN THE NEW TESTAMENT,

QUOTED FROM THE OLD, AND CALLED PROPHECIES OF THE COMING OF

JESUS CHRIST.

[THIS work was first published by Mr. Paine, at New-York, in 1807, and was the last of his writings edited by himself. It is evidently extracted from his answer to the bishop of Llandaff, or from his third part of the Age of Reason, both of which, it appears by his will, he left in manuscript. The term, "*The Bishop*," occurs in this examination six times, without designating what bishop is meant. Of all the replies to his second part of the Age of Reason, that of bishop Watson was the only one to which he paid particular attention; and he is, no doubt, the person here alluded to. Bishop's Watson's apology for the Bible had been published some years before Mr. P. left France, and the latter composed his answer to it, and also his third part of the Age of Reason, while in that country.

When Mr. Paine arrived in America, and found that liberal opinions on religion were in disrepute, through the influence of hypocrisy and superstition, he declined publishing the entire of the works which he had prepared; observing that "an author might lose the credit he had acquired by writing too much." He however gave to the public the examination before us, in a pamphlet form. But the apathy which appeared to prevail at that time in regard to religious inquiry, fully determined him to discontinue the publication of his theological writings. In this case, taking only a portion of one

of the works before mentioned, he chose a title adapted to the particular part selected.]

THE passages called Prophecies of, or concerning Jesus Christ, in the Old Testament, may be classed under the two following heads:—

First, those referred to in the four books of the New Testament, called the four Evangelists, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.

Secondly, those which translators and commentators have, of their own imagination, erected into prophecies, and dubbed with that title at the head of the several chapters of the Old Testament. Of these it is scarcely worth while to waste time, ink, and paper upon; I shall therefore confine myself chiefly to those referred to in the aforesaid four books of the New Testament. If I show that these are not prophecies of the person called Jesus Christ, nor have reference to any such person, it will be perfectly needless to combat those which translators or the Church have invented, and for which they had no other authority than their own imagination.

I begin with the book called the Gospel according to St. Matthew.

In the first chap. ver. 18, it is said, "*Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise; when his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together,* SHE WAS FOUND WITH CHILD BY THE HOLY GHOST."—This is going a little too fast; because to make this verse agree with the next it should have said no more than that *she was found with child;* for the next verse says, "*Then Joseph her husband being a just man, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privily.*"—Consequently Joseph had found out no more than that she was with child, and he knew it was not by himself.

V. 20. "*And while he thought of these things* (that is, whether he should put her away privily, or make a public example of her), *behold the Angel of the Lord appeared to him* IN A DREAM (that is, Joseph *dreamed* that an angel appeared unto him), *saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a*

son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus; for he shall save his people from their sins."

Now, without entering into any discussion upon the merits or demerits of the account here given, it is proper to observe, that it has no higher authority than that of a dream; for it is impossible for a man to behold anything in a dream, but that which he dreams of. I ask not, therefore, whether Joseph (if there was such a man) had such a dream or not; because, admitting he had, it proves nothing. So wonderful and rational is the faculty of the mind in dreams that it acts the part of all the characters its imagination creates, and what it thinks it hears from any of them, is no other than what the roving rapidity of its own imagination invents. It is therefore nothing to me what Joseph dreamed of; whether of the fidelity or infidelity of his wife.—I pay no regard to my own dreams, and I should be weak indeed to put faith in the dreams of another.

The verses that follow those I have quoted, are the words of the writer of the book of Matthew. "*Now* (says he), *all this* (that is all this dreaming and this pregnancy) *was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the Prophet, saying,*

"*Behold a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted, is, God with us.*"

This passage is in Isaiah, chap. vii. ver. 14, and the writer of the book of Matthew endeavours to make his readers believe that this passage is a prophecy of the person called Jesus Christ. It is no such thing—and I go to show it is not. But it is first necessary that I explain the occasion of these words being spoken by Isaiah; the reader will then easily perceive, that so far from their being a prophecy of Jesus Christ, they have not the least reference to such a person, or anything that could happen in the time that Christ is said to have lived—which was about seven hundred years after the time of Isaiah. The case is this:

On the death of Solomon the Jewish nation split into two monarchies; one called the kingdom of Judah, the capital of which was Jerusalem; the other the kingdom of Israel, the capital of which was Samaria. The kingdom of Judah followed the line of David, and the kingdom of Israel that of

Saul; and these two rival monarchies frequently carried on fierce wars against each other.

At the time Ahaz was king of Judah, which was in the time of Isaiah, Pekah was king of Israel: and Pekah joined himself to Rezin, king of Syria, to make war against Ahaz, king of Judah; and these two kings marched a confederated and powerful army against Jerusalem. Ahaz and his people became alarmed at the danger, and "*their hearts were moved as the trees of the wood are moved with the wind.*" Isaiah, chap. vii. ver. 3.

In this perilous situation of things, Isaiah addressed himself to Ahaz, and assures him, in the name of the Lord (the cant phrase of all the prophets), that these two kings should not succeed against him; and to assure him that this should be the case (the case was however directly contrary*) tells Ahaz to ask a sign of the Lord. This Ahaz declined doing, giving as a reason, that he would not tempt the Lord: upon which Isaiah, who pretends to be sent from God, says, ver. 14, "Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign, *behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a son*—Butter and honey shall he eat, that he may know to refuse the evil and choose the good—For before the child shall know to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land which thou abhorrest shall be forsaken of both her kings"—meaning the king of Israel and the king of Syria, who were marching against him.

Here then is the sign, which was to be the birth of a child, and that child a son; and here also is the time limited for the accomplishment of the sign, namely, before the child should know to refuse the evil and choose the good.

The thing, therefore, to be a sign of success to Ahaz must

* *Chron. chap.* xxviii. *ver.* 1*st.* Ahaz was twenty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem, but he did not that which was right in the sight of the Lord.—*Ver.* 5. Wherefore the Lord his God delivered him into the hand of the king of Syria, and they smote him, and carried away a great multitude of them captive and brought them to Damascus: and he was also delivered into the hand of the king of Israel, who smote him with a great slaughter.

Ver. 6. And Pekah (king of Israel) slew in Judah an hundred and *twenty thousand* in one day.—*Ver.* 8. And the children of Israel *carried away captive* of their brethren two hundred thousand women, *sons and daughters.*

be something that would take place before the event of the battle then pending between him and the two kings could be known. A thing to be a sign must precede the thing signified. The sign of rain must be before the rain.

It would have been mockery and insulting nonsense for Isaiah to have assured Ahaz as a sign that these two kings should not prevail against him; that a child should be born seven hundred years after he was dead; and that before the child so born should know to refuse the evil and choose the good, he, Ahaz, should be delivered from the danger he was then immediately threatened with.

But the case is, that the child of which Isaiah speaks was *his own child*, with which his wife or his mistress was then pregnant; for he says in the next chapter, v. 2, "*And I took unto me faithful witnesses to record, Uriah the priest, and Zechariah the son of Jeberechiah; and I went unto the prophetess, and she conceived and bare a son:*" and he says at ver. 18 of the same chapter, "*Behold I and the children whom the Lord hath given me are for signs and for wonders in Israel.*"

It may not be improper here to observe, that the word translated *a virgin* in Isaiah, does not signify a virgin in Hebrew, but merely a *young woman*. The tense also is falsified in the translation. Levi gives the Hebrew text of the 14th ver. of the 7th chap. of Isaiah, and the translation in English with it —"*Behold a young woman is with child and beareth a son.*" The expression, says he, is in the present tense. This translation agrees with the other circumstances related of the birth of this child, which was to be a sign to Ahaz. But as the true translation could not have been imposed upon the world as a prophecy of a child to be born seven hundred years afterwards, the Christian translators have falsified the original; and instead of making Isaiah to say, behold a *young woman* is with child and *beareth* a son—they make him to say, behold a *virgin shall* conceive and *bear* a son. It is however only necessary for a person to read the 7th and 8th chapters of Isaiah, and he will be convinced that the passage in question is no prophecy of the person called Jesus Christ. I pass on to the second passage quoted from the Old Testament by the New, as a prophecy of Jesus Christ.

Matthew, chap. ii. ver. 1. "Now when Jesus was born in

Bethlehem of Judah, in the days of Herod the king, behold there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem—saying, Where is he that is born king of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him. When Herod, the king, heard these things, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him—and when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born—and they said unto him, in Bethlehem, in the land of Judea; for thus it is written by the prophet—*and thou Bethlehem, in the land of Judea, art thou not the least among the Princes of Judea, for out of thee shall come a Governor that shall rule my people Israel.*" This passage is in Micah, chap. v. ver. 2.

I pass over the absurdity of seeing and following a star in the day-time, as a man would a *Will with the wisp*, or a candle and lantern at night; and also that of seeing it in the east, when themselves came from the east; for could such a thing be seen at all to serve them for a guide, it must be in the west to them. I confine myself solely to the passage called a prophecy of Jesus Christ.

The book of Micah, in the passage above quoted, chap. v. ver. 2, is speaking of some person without mentioning his name, from whom some great achievements were expected; but the description he gives of this person at the 5th verse proves evidently that it is not Jesus Christ, for he says at the 5th ver. "and *this man* shall be the peace when the Assyrian shall come into our land, and when he shall tread in our palaces, then shall we raise up against him (that is, against the Assyrians) seven shepherds and eight principal men.—verse 6. And they shall waste the land of Assyria with the sword, and the land of Nimrod on the entrance thereof; thus shall *He* (the person spoken of at the head of the second verse) deliver us from the Assyrian when he cometh into our land, and when he treadeth within our borders."

This is so evidently descriptive of a military chief, that it cannot be applied to Christ without outraging the character they pretend to give us of him. Besides which, the circumstances of the times here spoken of, and those of the times in *which Christ* is said to have lived, are in contradiction to each *other. It* was the Romans, and not the Assyrians, that had *conquered* and *were in the* land of Judea, and trod in their

palaces when Christ was born, and when he died, and so far from his driving them out, it was they who signed the warrant for his execution, and he suffered under it.

Having thus shown that this is no prophecy of Jesus Christ, I pass on to the third passage quoted from the Old Testament by the New, as a prophecy of him.

This, like the first I have spoken of, is introduced by a dream. Joseph dreameth another dream, and dreameth that he seeth another angel. The account begins at the 13th ver. of 2d chap. of Matthew.

"The angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word: For Herod will seek the life of the young child to destroy him. When he arose he took the young child and his mother by night and departed into Egypt—and was there until the death of Herod, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, "*Out of Egypt have I called my son.*"

This passage is in the book of Hosea, chap. xi. ver. 1. The words are, "When Israel was a child then I loved him and *called my son out of Egypt*—As they called them, so they went from them, they sacrificed unto Baalim and burnt incense to graven images."

This passage, falsely called a prophecy of Christ, refers to the children of Israel coming out of Egypt in the time of Pharaoh, and to the idolatry they committed afterwards. To make it apply to Jesus Christ, he must then be the person who *sacrificed unto Baalim and burnt incense to graven images*, for the person called out of Egypt by the collective name, Israel, and the persons committing this idolatry, are the same persons, or the descendants of them. This then can be no prophecy of Jesus Christ, unless they are willing to make an idolater of him. I pass on to the fourth passage called a prophecy by the writer of the book of Matthew.

This is introduced by a story, told by nobody but himself, and scarcely believed by anybody, of the slaughter of all the children under two years old, by the command of Herod. A thing which it is not probable should be done by Herod, as he only held an office under the Roman government, to which appeals *could always be had*, as we see in the case of Paul.

Matthew, however, having made or told his story, says, chap. ii. ver. 17—"Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy, the prophet, saying,—*In Ramah was there a voice heard, lamentation, weeping, and great mourning; Rachael weeping for her children, and would not be comforted because they were not.*"

This passage is in Jeremiah, chap. xxxi. ver. 15, and this verse, when separated from the verses before and after it, and which explains its application, might with equal propriety be applied to every case of wars, sieges, and other violences, such as the Christians themselves have often done to the Jews, where mothers have lamented the loss of their children. There is nothing in the verse taken singly that designates or points out any particular application of it, otherwise than it points to some circumstances which, at the time of writing it, had already happened, and not to a thing yet to happen, for the verse is in the preter or past tense. I go to explain the case, and show the application of the verse.

Jeremiah lived in the time that Nebuchadnezzar besieged, took, plundered, and destroyed Jerusalem, and led the Jews captive to Babylon. He carried his violence against the Jews to every extreme. He slew the sons of king Zedekiah before his face, he then put out the eyes of Zedekiah, and kept him in prison till the day of his death.

It is of this time of sorrow and suffering to the Jews that Jeremiah is speaking. Their temple was destroyed, their land desolated, their nation and government entirely broken up, and themselves, men, women, and children, carried into captivity. They had too many sorrows of their own, immediately before their eyes, to permit them, or any of their chiefs, to be employing themselves on things that might, or might not, happen in the world seven hundred years afterwards.

It is, as already observed, of this time of sorrow and suffering to the Jews that Jeremiah is speaking in the verse in question. In the two next verses, the 16th and 17th, he endeavours to console the sufferers by giving them hopes, and according to the fashion of speaking in those days, assurances from the Lord, that their sufferings should have an end, and that *their children should return again to their own land.* But I leave the verses to speak for themselves, and the Old Testament to testify against the New.

Jeremiah, chap. xxxi. ver. 15.—"Thus saith the Lord, a voice *was* heard in Ramah (it is in the preter tense) lamentation and bitter weeping: Rachael weeping for her children, because they were not."

Verse 16.—"Thus saith the Lord, refrain thy voice from weeping, and thine eyes from tears; for thy work shall be rewarded, saith the Lord, *and* THEY *shall come again from the land of the enemy.*"

Verse 17.—"And there is hope in thine end, saith the Lord, that *thy children shall come again to their own border.*"

By what strange ignorance or imposition is it, that the children of which Jeremiah speaks, (meaning the people of the Jewish nation, scripturally called *children of Israel*, and not mere infants under two years old,) and who were to return again from the land of the enemy, and come again [illegible] own borders, can mean the children that Matth[illegible] Herod to slaughter? Could those return again fr[illegible] of the enemy, or how can the land of the enemy [illegible] them? Could they come again to their own bord[illegible] heaven! How has the world been imposed upo[illegible] ment-makers, priestcraft, and pretended prophecie[illegible] on to the fifth passage called a prophecy of Jesus Ch[illegible]

This, like two of the former, is introduced [illegible] Joseph dreamed another dream, and dreameth of an[illegible] gel. And Matthew is again the historian of the [illegible] the dreamer. If it were asked how Matthew could [illegible] Joseph dreamed, neither the Bishop nor all the [illegible] answer the question. Perhaps it was Matthe[illegible] and not Joseph, that is, Joseph dreamed by pr[illegible] brain, as they tell us Daniel dreamed fo[illegible] But be this as it may, I go on with my su[illegible]

The account of this dream is in Matthe[illegible] —"But when Herod was dead, behold a[illegible] appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt[illegible] take the young child and its mother, an[illegible] Israel, for they are dead which sought th[illegible] and he arose and took the young child [illegible] came into the land of Israel. But whe[illegible] laus did reign in Judea in the room of [illegible] was afraid to go thither. Notwithstan[illegible] God in a *dream (here is* another dream[illegible]

the parts of Galilee; and he came and dwelt in a city called *Nazareth, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets—He shall be called a Nazarene.*"

Here is good circumstantial evidence, that Matthew dreamed, for there is no such passage in all the Old Testament: and I invite the bishop and all the priests in Christendom, including those of America, to produce it. I pass on to the sixth passage, called a prophecy of Jesus Christ.

This, as Swift says on another occasion, is *lugged in head and shoulder;* it need only to be seen in order to be hooted as a forced and far-fetched piece of imposition.

Matthew, chap. iv. v. 12. "Now when Jesus heard that John was cast into prison, he departed into Galilee—and leaving Nazareth, he came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is upon the sea coast, in the borders of Zabulon and Nephthalim—That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias (Isaiah) the prophet, saying, *The land of Zabulon and the land of Nephthalim, by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan Galilee of the Gentiles—the people which sat in darkness saw great light, and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death, light is springing upon them.*"

I wonder Matthew has not made the cris-cross-row, or the christ-cross-row (I know not how the priests spell it) into a prophecy. He might as well have done this as cut out these unconnected and undescriptive sentences from the place they stand in and dubbed them with that title.

The words, however, are in Isaiah, chap. ix. ver. 1, 2, as follows:—

"Nevertheless the dimness shall not be such as was in her vexation, when at the first he lightly afflicted *the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, and afterward did more grievously afflict her by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, in Galilee of the nations.*"

All this relates to two circumstances that had already happened, at the time these words in Isaiah were written. The one, where the land of Zebulon and Nephthali had been lightly afflicted, and afterwards more grievously by the way of the sea. But observe, reader, how Matthew has falsified the text. He *begins his* quotation at a part of the verse where there is not so *much as a comma*, and thereby cuts off everything that relates *to the first affliction*. He then leaves out all that relates to

the second affliction, and by this means leaves out everything that makes the verse intelligible, and reduces it to a senseless skeleton of names of towns.

To bring this imposition of Matthew clearly and immediately before the eye of the reader, I will repeat the verse, and put between crotchets the words he has left out, and put in Italics those he has preserved.

[Nevertheless the dimness shall not be such as was in her vexation when at the first he lightly afflicted] *the land of Zebulon and the land of Nephthali*, [and did afterwards more grievously afflict her] *by the way of the sea beyond Jordan in Galilee of the nations.*

What gross imposition is it to gut, as the phrase is, a verse in this manner, render it perfectly senseless, and then puff it off on a credulous world as a prophecy. I proceed to the next verse.

Ver. 2. "The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light; they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined." All this is historical, and not in the least prophetical. The whole is in the preter tense: it speaks of things that *had been accomplished* at the time the words were written, and not of things to be accomplished afterwards.

As then the passage is in no possible sense prophetical, nor intended to be so, and that to attempt to make it so, is not only to falsify the original, but to commit a criminal imposition; it is matter of no concern to us, otherwise than as curiosity, to know who the people were of which the passage speaks, that sat in darkness, and what the light was that had shined in upon them.

If we look into the preceding chapter, the 8th, of which the 9th is only a continuation, we shall find the writer speaking, at the 19th verse, of "*witches and wizards who peep about and mutter*," and of people who made application to them; and he preaches and exhorts them against this darksome practice. It is of this people, and of this darksome practice, or *walking in darkness*, that he is speaking at the 2d verse of the 9th chapter; and with respect to *the light that had shined in upon them*, it refers entirely to his own ministry, and to the boldness of it, which opposed itself to that of the witches *and wizards who peeped about* and muttered.

Isaiah is, upon the whole, a wild disorderly writer, preserving in general no clear chain of perception in the arrangement of his ideas, and consequently producing no defined conclusions from them. It is the wildness of his style, the confusion of his ideas, and the ranting metaphors he employs, that have afforded so many opportunities to priestcraft in some cases, and to superstition in others, to impose those defects upon the world as prophecies of Jesus Christ. Finding no direct meaning in them, and not knowing what to make of them, and supposing at the same time they were intended to have a meaning, they supplied the defect by inventing a meaning of their own, and called it his. I have, however, in this place done Isaiah the justice to rescue him from the claws of Matthew, who has torn him unmercifully to pieces; and from the imposition or ignorance of priests and commentators, by letting Isaiah speak for himself.

If the words *walking in darkness*, and *light breaking in*, could in any case be applied prophetically, which they cannot be, they would better apply to the times we now live in than to any other. The world has "*walked in darkness*" for eighteen hundred years, both as to religion and government, and it is only since the American Revolution began that light has broken in. The belief of *one God*, whose attributes are revealed to us in the book of scripture of the creation, which no human hand can counterfeit or falsify, and not in the written or printed book which, as Matthew has shown, can be altered or falsified by ignorance or design, is now making its way among us; and as to government, *the light is already gone forth*, and whilst men ought to be careful not to be blinded by the excess of it, as at a certain time in France, when every thing was Robespierrean violence, they ought to reverence, and even to adore it, with all the firmness and perseverance that true wisdom can inspire.

I pass on to the seventh passage, called a prophecy of Jesus Christ.

Matthew, chap. viii. ver. 16. "When the evening was come, they brought unto him (Jesus) many that were possessed with devils, and he cast out the spirit with his word, and healed *all that* were sick.—That it might be fulfilled which was *spoken by Esaias* (Isaiah) the prophet, saying, *Himself took our infirmities, and bare our* sicknesses."

This affair of people being possessed by devils, and of casting them out, was the fable of the day when the books of the New Testament were written. It had not existence at any other time. The books of the Old Testament mention no such thing; the people of the present day know of no such thing; nor does the history of any people or country speak of such a thing. It starts upon us all at once in the book of Matthew, and is altogether an invention of the New Testament-makers and the Christian church. The book of Matthew is the first book where the word *Devil* is mentioned.* We read in some of the books of the Old Testament of things called familiar spirits, the supposed companions of people called witches and wizards. It was no other than the trick of pretended conjurors to obtain money from credulous and ignorant people, or the fabricated charge of superstitious malignancy against unfortunate and decrepid old age.

But the idea of a familiar spirit, if we can affix any idea to the term, is exceedingly different to that of being possessed by a devil. In the one case, the supposed familiar spirit is a dexterous agent, that comes and goes and does as he is bidden: in the other, he is a turbulent roaring monster, that tears and tortures the body into convulsions. (Reader, whoever thou art, put thy trust in thy Creator, make use of the reason he endowed thee with, and cast from thee all such fables.)

The passage alluded to by Matthew, for as a quotation it is false, is in Isaiah, chap. liii., v. 4, which is as follows:

"Surely *he* (the person of whom Isaiah is speaking of) *hath borne* our griefs and carried our sorrows." It is in the preter tense.

Here is nothing about casting out devils, nor curing of sicknesses. The passage, therefore, so far from being a prophecy of Christ, is not even applicable as a circumstance.

Isaiah, or at least the writer of the book that bears his name, employs the whole of this chapter, the 53d, in lamenting the sufferings of some deceased persons, of whom he speaks very pathetically. It is a monody on the death of a friend; but he mentions not the name of the person, nor gives any circumstance of him by which he can be personally known; and it is this silence, which is evidence of nothing, that Matthew

* *The word devil* is a personification of the word evil.

has laid hold of to put the name of Christ to it; as if the chiefs of the Jews, whose sorrows were then great, and the times they lived in big with danger, were never thinking about their own affairs, nor the fate of their own friends, but were continually running a wild goose chase into futurity.

To make a monody into a prophecy is an absurdity. The characters and circumstances of men, even in different ages of the world, are so much alike, that what is said of one may with propriety be said of many; but this fitness does not make the passage into a prophecy; and none but an impostor or a bigot would call it so.

Isaiah, in deploring the hard fate and loss of his friend, mentions nothing of him but what the human lot of man is subject to. All the cases he states of him, his persecutions, his imprisonment, his patience in suffering, and his perseverance in principle, are all within the line of nature; they belong exclusively to none, and may with justness be said of many. But if Jesus Christ was the person the church represents him to be, that which would exclusively apply to him, must be something that could not apply to any other person; something beyond the line of nature; something beyond the lot of mortal man; and there are no such expressions in this chapter, nor any other chapter in the Old Testament.

It is no exclusive description to say of a person, as is said of the person Isaiah is lamenting in this chapter, "*He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before his shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth.*" This may be said of thousands of persons, who have suffered oppressions and unjust death with patience, silence, and perfect resignation.

Grotius, whom the bishop esteems a most learned man, and who certainly was so, supposed that the person of whom Isaiah is speaking, is Jeremiah. Grotius is led into this opinion, from the agreement there is between the description given by Isaiah, and the case of Jeremiah, as stated in the book that bears his name. If Jeremiah was an innocent man, *and not* a traitor in the interest of Nebuchadnezzar, when *Jerusalem* was besieged, his case was hard; he was accused

by his countrymen, was persecuted, oppressed, and imprisoned, and he says of himself (see Jeremiah, chapter ii. ver. 19), "*But as for me, I was like a lamb or an ox that is brought to the slaughter.*"

I should be inclined to the same opinion with Grotius, had Isaiah lived at the time when Jeremiah underwent the cruelties of which he speaks; but Isaiah died about fifty years before: and it is of a person of his own time, whose case Isaiah is lamenting in the chapter in question, and which imposition and bigotry, more than seven hundred years afterwards, perverted into a prophecy of a person they call Jesus Christ.

I pass on to the eighth passage called a prophecy of Jesus Christ.

Matthew, chap. xii., ver. 14. "Then the pharisees went out and held a council against him, how they might destroy him—But when Jesus knew it he withdrew himself; and great numbers followed him, and he healed them all—and he charged them that they should not make him known: That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias (Isaiah) the prophet, saying,

"Behold my servant whom I have chosen: my beloved in whom my soul is well pleased; I will put my spirit upon him, and he shall show judgment to the Gentiles—he shall not strive nor cry, neither shall any man hear his voice in the streets—a bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench, till he sends forth judgment unto victory —and in his name shall the Gentiles trust."

In the first place, this passage hath not the least relation to the purpose for which it is quoted.

Matthew says, that the Pharisees held a council against Jesus to destroy him—that Jesus withdrew himself—that great numbers followed him—that he healed them—and that he charged them they should not make him known.

But the passage Matthew has quoted as being fulfilled by these circumstances, does not so much as apply to any one of them. It has nothing to do with the Pharisees holding a council to destroy Jesus—with his withdrawing himself—with great numbers following him—with his healing them—nor with his charging them not to make him known.

The purpose for which the passage is quoted, and the

passage itself, are as remote from each other, as nothing from something. But the case is, that people have been so long in the habit of reading the books called the Bible and Testament, with their eyes shut, and their senses locked up, that the most stupid inconsistencies have passed on them for truth, and imposition for prophecy. The all-wise Creator hath been dishonoured by being made the author of fable, and the human mind degraded by believing it.

In this passage, as in that last mentioned, the name of the person of whom the passage speaks is not given, and we are left in the dark respecting him. It is this defect in the history, that bigotry and imposition have laid hold of, to call it prophecy.

Had Isaiah lived in the time of Cyrus, the passage would descriptively apply to him. As king of Persia, his authority was great among the Gentiles, and it is of such a character the passage speaks; and his friendship to the Jews whom he liberated from captivity, and who might then be compared to a *bruised reed*, was extensive. But this description does not apply to Jesus Christ, who had no authority among the Gentiles; and as to his own countrymen, figuratively described by the bruised reed, it was they who crucified him. Neither can it be said of him that he did not cry, and that his voice was not heard in the street. As a preacher it was his business to be heard, and we are told that he travelled about the country for that purpose. Matthew has given a long sermon, which (if his authority is good, but which is much to be doubted, since he imposes so much,) Jesus preached to a multitude upon a mountain, and it would be a quibble to say that a mountain is not a street, since it is a place equally as public.

The last verse in the passage (the 4th), as it stands in Isaiah, and which Matthew has not quoted, says, "He shall not fail nor be discouraged till he have set judgment in the earth and the isles shall wait for his law." This also applies to Cyrus. He was not discouraged, he did not fail, he conquered all Babylon, liberated the Jews, and established laws. But this cannot be said of Jesus Christ, who, in the passage before us, according to Matthew, withdrew himself for fear of the *Pharisees*, and charged the people that followed him not to *make it known* where he was; and who, according to oth

parts of the Testament, was continually moving from place to place to avoid being apprehended.*

But it is immaterial to us, at this distance of time, to know who the person was: it is sufficient to the purpose I am upon, that of detecting fraud and falsehood, to know who it was not, and to show it was not the person called Jesus Christ.

* In the second part of the *Age of Reason*, I have shown that the book ascribed to Isaiah is not only miscellaneous as to matter, but as to authorship: that there are parts in it which could not be written by Isaiah, because they speak of things one hundred and fifty years after he was dead. The instance I have given of this, in that work, corresponds with the subject I am upon, *at least a little better than Matthew's introduction and his quotation.*

Isaiah lived, the latter part of his life, in the time of Hezekiah, and it was about one hundred and fifty years, from the death of Hezekiah to the first year of the reign of Cyrus, when Cyrus published a proclamation, which is given in the first chapter of the book of Ezra, for the return of the Jews to Jerusalem. It cannot be doubted, at least it ought not to be doubted, that the Jews would feel an affectionate gratitude for this act of benevolent justice, and it is natural they would express that gratitude in the customary style, bombastical and hyperbolical as it was, which they used on extraordinary occasions, and which was, and still is in practice with all the eastern nations.

The instance to which I refer, and which is given in the second part of the Age of Reason, is the last verse of the 44th chapter, and the beginning of the 45th—in these words: "*That saith of Cyrus, he is my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure: even saying to Jerusalem, thou shalt be built, and to the Temple, thy foundation shall be laid. Thus saith the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden to subdue nations before him; and I will loose the loins of kings, to open before him the two-leaved gates, and the gates shall not be shut.*"

This complimentary address is in the present tense, which shows that the things of which it speaks were in existence at the time of writing it; and consequently, that the author must have been at least one hundred and fifty years later than Isaiah, and that the book which bears his name is a compilation. The Proverbs called Solomon's, and the Psalms called David's, are of the same kind. The two last verses of the second book of Chronicles, and the three first verses of the first chapter of Ezra, are word for word the same; which show that the compilers of the Bible mixed the writings of different authors together, and put them under some common head.

As we have here an instance in the 44th and 45th chapters of the introduction of the name of Cyrus into a book to which it cannot belong, it affords good ground to conclude, that the passage in the 42d chapter, in which the character of Cyrus is given without his name, has been introduced in like manner, and that the person there spoken of is Cyrus.

I pass on to the ninth passage called a prophecy of Jesus Christ.

Matthew, chap. xxi. v. 1. "And when they drew nigh unto Jerusalem, and were come to Bethpage, unto the mount of Olives, then Jesus sent two of his disciples, saying unto them, Go into the village over against you, and straightway ye shall find an ass tied, and a colt with her, loose them and bring them unto me—and if any man say aught to you, ye shall say, the Lord hath need of them, and straightway he will send them.

"All this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, *Tell ye the daughter of Sion, behold thy king cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting on an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass.*"

Poor ass! let it be some consolation amidst all thy sufferings, that if the heathen world erected a bear into a constellation, the Christian world has elevated thee into a prophecy.

This passage is in Zechariah, chap. ix. ver. 9, and is one of the whims of friend Zechariah to congratulate his countrymen, who were then returning from captivity in Babylon, and himself with them, to Jerusalem. It has no concern with any other subject. It is strange that apostles, priests, and commentators, never permit, or never suppose, the Jews to be speaking of their own affairs. Everything in the Jewish books is perverted and distorted into meanings never intended by the writers. Even the poor ass must not be a Jew-ass but a Christian-ass. I wonder they did not make an apostle of him, or a bishop, or at least make him speak and prophesy. He could have lifted up his voice as loud as any of them.

Zechariah, in the first chapter of his book, indulges himself in several whims on the joy of getting back to Jerusalem. He says at the 8th verse, "I saw by night (Zechariah was a sharp-sighted seer), and behold a man sitting on a *red horse* (yes, reader, a *red horse*), and he stood among the myrtle trees that were in the bottom, and behind him were *red horses speckled and white.*" He says nothing about green horses, nor blue horses, perhaps because it is difficult to distinguish green from blue by night, but a Christian can have no doubt they were there, because "*faith is the evidence of things not seen.*"

Zechariah then introduces an angel among his horses, but

he does not tell us what colour the angel was of, whether black or white, nor whether he came to buy horses, or only to look at them as curiosities, for certainly they were of that kind. Be this however, as it may, he enters into conversation with this angel, on the joyful affair of getting back to Jerusalem, and he saith at the 16th verse, "Therefore, thus saith the Lord, *I am returned* to Jerusalem with mercies; my house shall be built in it, saith the Lord of hosts, and a line shall be stretched forth upon Jerusalem." An expression signifying the rebuilding the city.

All this, whimsical and imaginary as it is, sufficiently proves that it was the entry of the Jews into Jerusalem from captivity, and not the entry of Jesus Christ seven hundred years afterwards, that is the subject upon which Zechariah is always speaking.

As to the expression of riding upon an ass, which commentators represent as a sign of humility in Jesus Christ, the case is, he never was so well mounted before. The asses of those countries are large and well-proportioned, and were anciently the chief of riding animals. Their beasts of burden, and which served also for the conveyance of the poor, were camels and dromedaries. We read in Judges, chap. x. ver. 4, that "Jair (one of the Judges of Israel) had thirty sons that rode on thirty *ass-colts*, and they had thirty cities." But commentators distort everything.

There is besides very reasonable grounds to conclude that this story of Jesus riding publicly into Jerusalem, accompanied, as it is said at the 8th and 9th verses, by a great multitude, shouting and rejoicing, and spreading their garments by the way, is altogether a story destitute of truth.

In the last passage called a prophecy that I examined, Jesus is represented as withdrawing, that is, running away, and concealing himself for fear of being apprehended, and charging the people that were with him not to make him known. No new circumstance had arisen in the interim to change his condition for the better; yet here he is represented as making his public entry into the same city from which he had fled for safety. The two cases contradict each other so much, that if both are not false, one of them at least can scarcely be true. For my own part, I do not believe there is one word of historical *truth in the whole* book. I look upon it at best to be a

romance; the principal personage of which is an imaginary or allegorical character founded upon some tale, and in which the moral is in many parts good, and the narrative part very badly and blunderingly written.

I pass on to the tenth passage called a prophecy of Jesus Christ.

Matthew, chap. xxvi. ver. 51. "And behold one of them which was with Jesus (meaning Peter) stretched out his hand, and drew his sword, and struck a servant of the high priest, and smote off his ear. Then said Jesus unto him, Put up again thy sword into its place, for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword. Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels? But how then shall the scriptures be fulfilled that thus it must be? In that same hour Jesus said to the multitudes, Are ye come out as against a thief, with swords and with staves for to take me? I sat daily with you teaching in the temple, and ye laid no hold on me. But all this was done that the scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled."

This loose and general manner of speaking, admits neither of detection nor of proof. Here is no quotation given, nor the name of any Bible author mentioned, to which reference can be had.

There are, however, some high improbabilities against the truth of the account.

First—It is not probable that the Jews, who were then a conquered people, and under subjection to the Romans, should be permitted to wear swords.

Secondly—If Peter had attacked the servant of the high priest and cut off his ear, he would have been immediately taken up by the guard that took up his master, and sent to prison with him.

Thirdly—What sort of disciples and preaching apostles must those of Christ have been that wore swords?

Fourthly—This scene is represented to have taken place the same evening of what is called the Lord's Supper, which makes, according to the ceremony of it, the inconsistency of wearing swords the greater.

I pass on to the eleventh passage called a prophecy of Jesus *Christ.*

Matthew, chap. xxvii. ver. 3. "Then Judas, which had betrayed him, when he saw that he was condemned, repented himself, and brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, saying, I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood. And they said, What is that to us? see thou to that. And he cast down the pieces of silver, and departed and went and hanged himself—And the chief priests took the silver pieces and said, It is not lawful to put them in the treasury, because it is the price of blood—And they took counsel and bought with them the potter's field to bury strangers in—Wherefore that field is called the field of blood unto this day. Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet, saying, And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of him that was valued, whom they of the children of Israel did value, and gave them for the potter's field, as the Lord appointed me."

This is a most bare-faced piece of imposition. The passage in Jeremiah, which speaks of the purchase of a field, has no more to do with the case to which Matthew applies it, than it has to do with the purchase of lands in America. I will recite the whole passage:—

Jeremiah, chap. xxxii. v. 6. "And Jeremiah said, the word of the Lord came unto me, saying—Behold Hanamiel, the son of Shallum thine uncle, shall come unto thee, saying, Buy thee my field that is in Anathoth, for the right of redemption is thine to buy it—So Hanamiel mine uncle's son came to me in the court of the prison, according to the word of the Lord, and said unto me, Buy my field I pray thee, that is in Anathoth, which is in the country of Benjamin, for the right of inheritance is thine, and the redemption is thine; buy it for thyself. Then I knew that this was the word of the Lord—And I bought the field of Hanamiel mine uncle's son, that was in Anathoth, and weighed him the money, even seventeen shekels of silver—and I subscribed the evidence and sealed it, and took witnesses and weighed him the money in balances. So I took the evidence of the purchase, both that which was sealed according to the law and custom, and that which was open—and I gave the evidence of the purchase unto Baruch, the son of Neriah, the son of Maaseiah, in the sight of Hanamiel mine uncle's son, and in the presence of the witnesses that subscribed the book of the purchase, before all the Jews that

sat in the court of the prison—and I charged Baruch before them, saying, Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, Take these evidences, this evidence of the purchase, both which is sealed, and this evidence which is open, and put them in an earthen vessel, that they may continue many days—for thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, Houses, and fields, and vineyards, shall be possessed again in this land."

I forbear making any remark on this abominable imposition of Matthew. The thing glaringly speaks for itself. It is priests and commentators that I rather ought to censure, for having preached falsehood so long, and kept people in darkness with respect to those impositions. I am not contending with these men upon points of doctrine, for I know that sophistry has always a city of refuge. I am speaking of facts; for wherever the thing called a fact is a falsehood, the faith founded upon it is delusion, and the doctrine raised upon it not true. Ah, reader, put thy trust in thy Creator, and thou wilt be safe; but if thou trustest to the book called the Scriptures, thou trustest to the rotten staff of fable and falsehood. But I return to my subject.

There is among the whims and reveries of Zechariah, mention made of thirty pieces of silver given to a potter. They can hardly have been so stupid as to mistake a potter for a field: and if they had, the passage in Zechariah has no more to do with Jesus, Judas, and the field to bury strangers in, than that already quoted. I will recite the passage.

Zechariah, chap. xi. ver. 7. "And I will feed the flock of slaughter, even you, O poor of the flock; and I took unto me two staves; the one I called *Beauty* and the other I called *Bands*, and I fed the flock—Three shepherds also, I cut off in one month; and my soul loathed them, and their soul also abhorred me.—Then said I, I will not feed you; that which dieth, let it die; and that which is to be cut off, let it be cut off; and let the rest eat every one the flesh of another.—And I took my staff, even *Beauty*, and cut it asunder, that I might break my covenant which I had made with all the people.—And it was broken in that day; and so the poor of the flock who waited upon me, knew that it was the word of the Lord.

"And I said unto them, If ye think good, give me my price, *and if not, forbear.* So they weighed for my price *thirty pieces of silver.* And the Lord said unto me, Cast it unto the *potter*,

a goodly price that I was prized at of them; and I took the thirty pieces of silver and cast them to the potter in the house of the Lord.

"When I cut asunder mine other staff, even *Bands*, that I might break the brotherhood between Judah and Israel."*

There is no making either head or tail of this incoherent gibberish. His two staves, one called *Beauty* and the other *Bands*, is so much like a fairy tale, that I doubt if it had any other origin.—There is, however, no part that has the least relation to the case stated in Matthew; on the contrary it is the reverse of it. Here the *thirty pieces* of silver, whatever it was for, is called a *goodly price*, it was as much as the thing

* Whiston, in his Essay on the Old Testament, says, that the passage of Zechariah of which I have spoken, was in the copies of the Bible of the first century, in the book of Jeremiah, from whence, says he, it was taken and inserted without coherence, in that of Zechariah —well, let it be so, it does not make the case a whit the better for the New Testament; but it makes the case a great deal the worse for the Old. Because it shows, as I have mentioned respecting some passages in a book ascribed to Isaiah, that the works of different authors have been so mixed and confounded together, they cannot now be discriminated, except where they are historical, chronological, or biographical, as is the interpolation in Isaiah. It is the name of Cyrus inserted where it could not be inserted, as he was not in existence till one hundred and fifty years after the time of Isaiah, that detects the interpolation and the blunder with it.

Whiston was a man of great literary learning, and, what is of much higher degree, of deep scientific learning. He was one of the best and most celebrated mathematicians of his time, for which he was made professor of mathematics of the university of Cambridge. He wrote so much in defence of the Old Testament, and of what he calls prophecies of Jesus Christ, that at last he began to suspect the truth of the scriptures, and wrote against them: for it is only those who examine them, that see the imposition. Those who believe them most, are those who know least about them.

Whiston, after writing so much in defence of the scriptures, was at last prosecuted for writing against them. It was this that gave occasion to Swift, in his ludicrous epigram on Ditton and Whiston, each of which set up to find out the longitude, to call the one *good Master Ditton*, and the other, *wicked Will Whiston*. But as Swift was a great associate with the Freethinkers of those days, such as Bolingbroke, Pope, and others, who did not believe the book called the scriptures, there is no certainty whether he wittily called him wicked for defending the scriptures, or for writing against them. The known character of Swift decides for the former.

was worth, and according to the language of the day, was approved of by the Lord, and the money given to the potter in the house of the Lord. In the case of Jesus and Judas, as stated in Matthew, the thirty pieces of silver were the price of blood; the transaction was condemned by the Lord, and the money, when refunded, was refused admittance into the treasury. Everything in the two cases is the reverse of each other.

Besides this, a very different and direct contrary account to that of Matthew, is given of the affair of Judas, in the book called the *Acts of the Apostles*; according to that book the case is, that so far from Judas repenting and returning the money, and the high priest buying a field with it to bury strangers in, Judas kept the money and bought a field with it for himself; and instead of hanging himself as Matthew says, he fell headlong and burst asunder—some commentators endeavour to get over one part of the contradiction by ridiculously supposing that Judas hanged himself first and the rope broke.

Acts, chap. i. ver. 16. "Men and brethren, this scripture must needs have been fulfilled which the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spake before concerning Judas, which was a guide to them that took Jesus. (David says not a word about Judas) ver. 17, for he (Judas) was numbered among us and obtained part of our ministry."

Ver. 18. "*Now this man purchased a field with the reward of iniquity, and falling headlong he burst asunder in the midst, and his bowels gushed out.*" Is it not a species of blasphemy to call the New Testament *revealed religion*, when we see in it such contradictions and absurdities?

I pass on to the twelfth passage called a prophecy of Jesus Christ.

Matthew, chap. xxvii. ver. 35. "And they crucified him, and parted his garments, casting lots; that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, *They parted my garments among them, and upon my vesture did they cast lots.*" This expression is in the 22d Psalm, ver. 18. The writer of that Psalm (whoever he was, for the Psalms are a collection and not the work of one man) is speaking of himself and his own case, and not that of another. He begins this Psalm with the *words which* the New Testament writers ascribe to Jesus *Christ.* "*My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me*"—

words which might be uttered by a complaining man without any great impropriety, but very improperly from the mouth of a reputed God.

The picture which the writer draws of his own situation in this Psalm, is gloomy enough. He is not prophesying, but complaining of his own hard case. He represents himself as surrounded by enemies and beset by persecutions of every kind; and by way of showing the inveteracy of his persecutors, he says at the 18th verse, "*They parted my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture.*" The expression is in the present tense; and is the same as to say, they pursue me even to the clothes upon my back, and dispute how they shall divide them; besides, the word *vesture* does not always mean clothing of any kind, but *property*, or rather the admitting a man to, or *investing* him with property; and as it is used in this Psalm distinct from the word garment, it appears to be used in this sense. But Jesus had no property; for they make him say of himself, "*The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.*"

But be this as it may, if we permit ourselves to suppose the Almighty would condescend to tell, by what is called the spirit of prophecy, what could come to pass in some future age of the world, it is an injury to our own faculties, and to our ideas of his greatness, to imagine that it would be about an old coat, or an old pair of breeches, or about anything which the common accidents of life, or the quarrels that attend it, exhibit every day.

That which is in the power of man to do, or in his will not to do, is not a subject for prophecy, even if there were such a thing, because it cannot carry with it any evidence of divine power, or divine interposition: The ways of God are not the ways of men. That which an almighty power performs, or wills, is not within the circle of human power to do, or to control. But any executioner and his assistants might quarrel about dividing the garments of a sufferer, or divide them without quarrelling, and by that means fulfil the thing called a prophecy, or set it aside.

In the passage before examined, I have exposed the falsehood of them. In this I exhibit its degrading meanness, as an *insult to the Creator* and an injury to human reason.

Here end the passages called prophecies by Matthew.

Matthew concludes his book by saying, that when Christ expired on the cross, the rocks rent, the graves opened, and the bodies of many of the saints arose; and Mark says, there was darkness over the land from the sixth hour until the ninth. They produced no prophecy for this; but had these things been facts, they would have been a proper subject for prophecy, because none but an almighty power could have inspired a foreknowledge of them, and afterwards fulfilled them. Since then, there is no such prophecy, but a pretended prophecy of an old coat, the proper deduction is, there were no such things, and that the book of Matthew is fable and falsehood.

I pass on to the book called the Gospel according to St. Mark.

THE BOOK OF MARK.

THERE are but few passages in Mark called prophecies; and but few in Luke and John. Such as there are I shall examine, and also such other passages as interfere with those cited by Matthew.

Mark begins his book by a passage which he puts in the shape of a prophecy. Mark, chap. i. ver. 1.—"The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God—As it is written in the prophets, *Behold I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare the way before thee.*" Malachi chap. iii. ver. 1. The passage in the original is in the first person. Mark makes this passage to be a prophecy of John the Baptist, said by the Church to be a forerunner of Jesus Christ. But if we attend to the verses that follow this expression, as it stands in Malachi, and to the first and [illegible] verses of the next chapter, we shall see that this application of it is erroneous and false.

Malachi having said at the first verse, "Behold I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me," says at the second verse, "But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like *a refiner's fire*, and like fuller's soap."

This description can have no reference to the birth of Jesus Christ, and consequently none to John the Baptist. It is a scene of fear and terror that is here described, and the birth of Christ is always spoken of as a time of joy and glad tidings.

Malachi, continuing to speak on the same subject, explains in the next chapter what the scene is of which he speaks in the verses above quoted, and who the person is whom he calls the messenger.

"Behold," says he, chap. iv. ver. 1, "the day cometh that shall burn like an oven, and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble; and the day cometh that shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch."

Ver. 5. "Behold I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord."

By what right, or by what imposition or ignorance Mark has made Elijah into John the Baptist, and Malachi's description of the day of judgment into the birth day of Christ, I leave to the Bishop to settle.

Mark, in the second and third verses of his first chapter, confounds two passages together, taken from different books of the Old Testament. The second verse, "Behold I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare the way before me," is taken, as I have said before, from Malachi. The third verse, which says, "The voice of one crying in the wilderness, prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his path straight," is not in Malachi, but in Isaiah, chap. xl. ver. 3. Whiston says, that both these verses were originally in Isaiah. If so, it is another instance of the disordered state of the Bible, and corroborates what I have said with respect to the name and description of Cyrus being in the book of Isaiah, to which it cannot chronologically belong.

The words in Isaiah, chap. xl. ver. 3, "*The voice of him that cryeth in the wilderness, prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his path straight,*" are in the present tense, and consequently not predictive. It is one of those rhetorical figures which the Old Testament authors frequently used. That it is merely rhetorical and metaphorical, may be seen at the 6th verse. "And the voice said, cry; and he said, what shall I cry? *All flesh is grass.*" This is evidently nothing but a

figure; for flesh is not grass otherwise than as a figu metaphor, where one thing is put for another. Besides w the whole passage is too general and declamatory to be a exclusively to any particular person or purpose.

I pass on to the eleventh chapter.

In this chapter, Mark speaks of Christ riding into Jeru upon a colt, but he does not make it the accomplishment prophecy, as Matthew has done; for he says nothing ab prophecy. Instead of which, he goes on the other and in order to add new honours to the ass, he makes it a miracle; for he says, ver. 2, it was "*a colt whereon man sat;*" signifying thereby, that as the ass had not broken, he consequently was inspired *into good manner* we do not hear that he kicked Jesus Christ off. There i a word about his kicking in all the four Evangelists.

I pass on from these feats of *horsemanship*, performed a jack-ass, to the 15th chapter.

At the 24th verse of this chapter, Mark speaks of *pa Christ's garments and casting lots upon them*, but he ap no prophecy to it as Matthew does. He rather speaks as a thing then in practice with executioners, as it is at day.

At the 28th verse of the same chapter, Mark speak Christ being crucified between two thieves; that, says he, *scripture might be fulfilled which saith, and he was numb with the transgressors.*" The same thing might be sai the thieves.

This expression is in Isaiah, chap. liii. ver. 12—Gr applies it to Jeremiah. But the case has happened so in the world, where innocent men have been numbered transgressors, and is still continually happening, that absurdity to call it a prophecy of any particular person. those whom the church call martyrs were numbered transgressors. All the honest patriots who fell upon the fold in France, in the time of Robespierre, were numb with transgressors; and if himself had not fallen, the case, according to a note in his own hand-writing, had bef me; yet I suppose the Bishop will not allow that Isaiah *prophesying* of Thomas Paine.

These are all the passages in Mark which have any refe *to prophecies.*

Mark concludes his book by making Jesus say to his disciples, chap. xvi. ver. 15, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature; he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned (fine Popish stuff this). And these signs shall follow them that believe; in my name they shall cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents, and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover."

Now, the Bishop, in order to know if he has all this saving and wonder-working faith, should try those things upon himself. He should take a good dose of arsenic, and if he please, I will send him a rattlesnake from America! As for myself, as I believe in God, and not at all in Jesus Christ, nor in the books called the scriptures, the experiment does not concern me.

I pass on to the book of Luke.

There are no passages in Luke called prophecies, excepting those which relate to the passages I have already examined.

Luke speaks of Mary being espoused to Joseph, but he makes no references to the passage in Isaiah, as Matthew does. He speaks also of Jesus riding into Jerusalem upon a colt; but he says nothing about prophecy. He speaks of John the Baptist, and refers to the passage in Isaiah, of which I have already spoken.

At the 13th chapter, verse 31, he says, "The same day there came certain of the Pharisees, saying unto him, (Jesus) Get thee out and depart hence, for Herod will kill thee—and he said unto them, Go ye and tell that fox, Behold I cast out devils and I do cures to-day and to-morrow, and the third day I shall be perfected."

Matthew makes Herod to die whilst Christ was a child in Egypt, and makes Joseph to return with the child on the news of Herod's death, who had sought to kill him. Luke makes Herod to be living, and to seek the life of Jesus, after Jesus was thirty years of age; for he says, chap. iii. v. 23, "And Jesus began to be about thirty years of age, being, as was supposed, the son of Joseph."

The obscurity in which the historical part of the New Testament *is involved with respect* to Herod, may afford to priests

and commentators a plea, which to some may appear plausible but to none satisfactory, that the Herod of which Matthew speaks, and the Herod of which Luke speaks, were different persons. Matthew calls Herod a king; and Luke, chap. iii. v. 1, calls Herod, Tetrarch, (that is, Governor) of Galilee. But there could be no such person as *a king Herod*, because the Jews and their country were then under the dominion of the Roman Emperors, who governed them by Tetrarchs or Governors.

Luke, chap. ii., makes Jesus to be born when Cyrenius was Governor of Syria, to which government Judea was annexed; and according to this, Jesus was not born in the time of Herod. Luke says nothing about Herod seeking the life of Jesus when he was born; nor of his destroying the children under two years old; nor of Joseph fleeing with Jesus into Egypt; nor of his returning from thence. On the contrary, the book of Luke speaks as if the person it calls Christ had never been out of Judea, and that Herod sought his life after he commenced preaching, as is before stated. I have already shown that Luke, in the book called the Acts of the Apostles, (which commentators ascribe to Luke) contradicts the account in Matthew, with respect to Judas and the thirty pieces of silver. Matthew says, that Judas returned the money, and that the high priests bought with it a field to bury strangers in. Luke says, that Judas kept the money, and bought a field with it for himself.

As it is impossible the wisdom of God should err, so it is impossible those books should have been written by divine inspiration. Our belief in God, and his unerring wisdom, forbids us to believe it. As for myself, I feel religiously happy in the total disbelief of it.

There are no other passages called prophecies in Luke than those I have spoken of. I pass on to the book of John.

THE BOOK OF JOHN.

John, like Mark and Luke, is not much of a prophecy *monger*. He speaks of the ass, and the casting lots for Jesus' *clothes*, and some other trifles, of which I have already spoken

John makes Jesus to say, chap. v. ver. 46, "For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me, for he wrote of me." The book of the Acts, in speaking of Jesus, says, chap. iii. ver. 22, "For Moses truly said unto the fathers, a prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you, of your brethren, like unto me, him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shalt say unto you."

This passage is in Deuteronomy, chap. xviii. v. 15. They apply it as a prophecy of Jesus. What impositions! The person spoken of in Deuteronomy, and also in Numbers, where the same person is spoken of, is *Joshua*, the minister of Moses, and his immediate successor, and just such another Robespierrean character as Moses is represented to have been. The case, as related in those books, is as follows:—

Moses was grown old and near to his end, and in order to prevent confusion after his death,—for the Israelites had no settled system of government,—it was thought best to nominate a successor to Moses while he was yet living. This was done, as we are told, in the following manner:

Numbers, chap. xxvii. ver. 12. "And the Lord said unto Moses, Get thee up into this mount, Abarim, and see the land which I have given unto the children of Israel—and when thou hast seen it, thou also shalt be gathered unto thy people as Aaron thy brother is gathered. Ver. 15, And Moses spake unto the Lord, saying, Let the Lord, the God of the spirits of all flesh, set a man over the congregation—Which may go out before them, and which may go in before them, and which may lead them out, and which may bring them in, that the congregation of the Lord be not as sheep that have no shepherd—And the Lord said unto Moses, Take thee *Joshua*, the son of Nun, a man in whom is the spirit, and lay thine hand upon him; and set him before Eleazar, the priest, and before all the congregation, and give him a charge in their sight—and thou shalt put some of thine honour upon him, that all the congregation of the children of Israel may be obedient—ver. 22, and Moses did as the Lord commanded, and he took Joshua, and set him before Eleazar the priest, and before all the congregation; and he laid hands upon him, and gave him charge as the Lord commanded by the hand of Moses."

I have nothing to do, in this place, with the truth, or the

conjuration here practised, of raising up a successor to M like unto himself. The passage sufficiently proves it is Jo and that it is an imposition in John to make the case i prophecy of Jesus. But the prophecy-mongers were s spired with falsehood, that they never speak truth.*

* Newton, Bishop of Bristol in England, published a work in volumes, entitled, "*Dissertations on the Prophecies.*" The w tediously written and tiresome to read. He strains hard to every passage into a prophecy that suits his purpose.—Among o he makes this expression of Moses, "the Lord shall raise thee prophet like unto me," into a prophecy of Christ, who was not according to the Bible chronologies, till fifteen hundred and fift years after the time of Moses, whereas it was an immediate succ to Moses, who was then near his end, that is spoken of in the pa above quoted.

This Bishop, the better to impose this passage on the world prophecy of Christ, has entirely omitted the account in the bo Numbers which I have given at length, word for word, and shows, beyond the possibility of a doubt, that the person spoken Moses, is Joshua, and no other person.

Newton is but a superficial writer. He takes up things upon *say*, and inserts them without either examination or reflectio the more extraordinary and incredible they are, the better he them.

In speaking of the walls of Babylon, (volume the first, page he makes a quotation from a traveller of the name of *Tavernur*, he calls (by way of giving credit to what he says,) a *celebrate veller*, that those walls *were made of burnt brick, ten feet squar three feet thick.*—If Newton had only thought of calculating the w of such a brick, he would have seen the impossibility of their used or even made. A brick ten feet square, and three feet contains three hundred cubic feet, and allowing a cubic foot of to be only one hundred pounds, each of the Bishop's bricks weigh thirty thousand pounds; and it would take about thirt loads of clay (one horse carts) to make one brick.

But his account of the stones used in building Solomon's t (volume 2d, page 211,) far exceeds his bricks of ten feet squ the walls of Babylon; these are but brick-bats compared to the

The stones (says he) employed in the foundation, were in m tude forty cubits, that is, above sixty feet, a cubit, says he, somewhat more than a foot and a half, (a cubit is one foot nine i and the superstructure (says the Bishop) was worthy of such dations. There were some stones, says he, of the whitest m *forty-five* cubits long, five cubits high, and six cubits broad. *are the* dimensions this Bishop has given, which in measure of t *inches to a* foot, is 78 feet nine inches long, 10 feet 6 inches h

I pass on to the last passage in these fables of the Evangelists called a prophecy of Jesus Christ.

John, having spoken of Jesus expiring on the cross between two thieves, says, chap. xix. ver. 32: "Then came the soldiers, and brake the legs of the first (meaning one of the thieves) and of the other which was crucified with him. But when they came to Jesus, and saw that he was dead already, they brake not his legs—ver. 36, for these things were done that the Scripture should be fulfilled, "*A bone of him shall not be broken.*"

The passage here referred to is in Exodus, and has no more to do with Jesus than with the ass he rode upon to Jerusalem; nor yet so much, if a roasted jack-ass, like a roasted he-goat, might be eaten at a Jewish passover. It might be some consolation to an ass to know, that though his bones

and 8 feet three inches thick, and contains 7,234 cubic feet. I now go to demonstrate the imposition of this Bishop.

A cubic foot of water weighs sixty-two pounds and a half—The specific gravity of marble to water is as 2 1-2 is to one. The weight therefore of a cubic foot of marble is 156 pounds, which multiplied by 7,234, the number of cubic feet in one of those stones, makes the weight of it to be 1,128,504 pounds, which is 503 tons. Allowing then a horse to draw about half a ton, it will require a thousand horses to draw one such stone on the ground; how then were they to be lifted into the building by human hands?

The Bishop may talk of faith removing mountains, but all the faith of all the Bishops that ever lived could not remove one of those stones, and their bodily strength given in.

This Bishop also tells of *great guns* used by the Turks at the taking of Constantinople, one of which, he says, was drawn by seventy yoke of oxen, and by two thousand men. Volume 3d, page 117.

The weight of a cannon that carries a ball of 43 pounds, which is the largest cannon that are cast, weighs 8,000 pounds, about three tons and a half, and may be drawn by three yoke of oxen. Anybody may now calculate what the weight of the Bishop's great gun must be, that required seventy yoke of oxen to draw it. This Bishop beats Gulliver.

When men give up the use of the divine gift of reason in writing on any subject, be it religious or anything else, there are no bounds to their extravagance, no limit to their absurdities.

The three volumes which this Bishop has written on what he calls the prophecies, contain above 1,290 pages, and he says in vol. 3, page 117, "*I have studied brevity.*" This is as marvellous as the Bishop's great gun.

might be picked, they would not be broken. I go to state the case.

The book of Exodus, in instituting the Jewish passover, in which they were to eat a he-lamb or a he-goat, says, chap. xii. ver. 5, "Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year; ye shall take it from the *sheep* or from the *goats*."

The book, after stating some ceremonies to be used in killing and dressing it (for it was to be roasted, not boiled), says, ver. 43, "And the Lord said unto Moses and Aaron, this is the ordinance of the passover: there shall no stranger eat thereof; but every man's servant that is bought for money, when thou hast circumcised him, then shall he eat thereof. A foreigner shall not eat thereof. In one house shall it be eaten; thou shalt not carry forth aught of the flesh thereof abroad out of the house; *neither shalt thou break a bone thereof*."

We here see that the case as it stands in Exodus is a ceremony and not a prophecy, and totally unconnected with Jesus' bones, or any part of him.

John having thus filled up the measure of apostolic fable, concludes his book with something that beats all fable; for he says at the last verse, "And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which if they should be written every one, "*I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written*."

This is what in vulgar life is called a *thumper;* that is, not only a lie, but a lie beyond the line of possibility; besides which it is an absurdity, for if they should be written in the world, the world would contain them.—Here ends the examination of the passages called prophecies.

I HAVE now, reader, gone through and examined all the passages which the four books of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, quote from the Old Testament, and call them prophecies of Jesus Christ. When I first sat down to this examination, I expected to find cause for some censure, but little did I expect to find them so utterly destitute of truth, and of all *pretensions to* it, as I have shown them to be.

The practice which the writers of those books employ is not

more false than it is absurd. They state some trifling case of the person they call Jesus Christ, and then cut out a sentence from some passage of the Old Testament, and call it a prophecy of that case. But when the words thus cut out are restored to the place they are taken from, and read with the words before and after them, they give the lie to the New Testament. A short instance or two of this will suffice for the whole.

They make Joseph to dream of an angel, who informs him that Herod is dead, and tells him to come with the child out of Egypt. They then cut out a sentence from the book of Hosea, "*Out of Egypt have I called my Son*," and apply it as a prophecy in that case.

The words "*And called my Son out of Egypt*," are in the Bible;—but what of that? They are only part of a passage, and not a whole passage, and stand immediately connected with other words, which show they refer to the children of Israel coming out of Egypt in the time of Pharaoh, and to the idolatry they committed afterwards.

Again, they tell us that when the soldiers came to break the legs of the crucified persons, they found Jesus was already dead, and therefore did not break his. They then, with some alteration of the original, cut out a sentence from Exodus, "*a bone of him shall not be broken*," and apply it as a prophecy of that case.

The words, "*Neither shall he break a bone thereof*," (for they have altered the text) are in the Bible—but what of that? They are, as in the former case, only part of a passage, and not a whole passage, and when read with the words they are immediately joined to, show it is the bones of a he-lamb or a he-goat of which the passage speaks.

These repeated forgeries and falsifications create a well-founded suspicion, that all the cases spoken of concerning the person called Jesus Christ are *made cases*, on purposing to lug in, and that very clumsily, some broken sentences from the Old Testament, and apply them as prophecies of those cases; and that so far from his being the Son of God, he did not exist even as a man—that he is merely an imaginary or allegorical character, as Apollo, Hercules, Jupiter, and all the deities of antiquity were. There is no history written at the

e Jesus Christ is said to have lived that speaks of the tence of such a person, even as a man.

Did we find in any other book pretending to give a system religion, the falsehoods, falsifications, contradictions, and urdities, which are to be met with in almost every page of e Old and New Testament, all the priests of the present day, ho supposed themselves capable, would triumphantly show eir skill in criticism, and cry it down as a most glaring im- osition. But since the books in question belong to their own rade and profession, they, or at least many of them, seek to tifle every inquiry into them, and abuse those who have the honesty and the courage to do it.

When a book, as is the case with the Old and New Testament, is ushered into the world under the title of being the WORD OF GOD, it ought to be examined with the utmost strictness, in order to know if it has a well-founded claim to that title or not, and whether we are or are not imposed upon: for as no poison is so dangerous as that which poisons the physic, so no falsehood is so fatal as that which is made an article of faith.

This examination becomes more necessary, because when the New Testament was written, I might say invented, the art of printing was not known, and there were no other copies of the Old Testament than written copies. A written copy of that book would cost about as much as six hundred common printed bibles now cost. Consequently it was in the hands but of very few persons, and these chiefly of the church. This gave an opportunity to the writers of the New Testament to make quotations from the Old Testament as they pleased and call them prophecies, with very little danger of being detected. Besides which, the terrors and inquisitorial fury of the church, like what they tell us of the flaming sword that turned every way, stood sentry over the New Testament; and time, which brings everything else to light, has served to thicken the darkness that guards it from detection.

Were the New Testament now to appear for the first time, every priest of the present day would examine it line by line, and compare the detached sentences it calls prophecies with *the whole* passages in the Old Testament from whence they *are taken.* Why then do they not make the same examination *at this time,* as they would make had the New Testa-

never appeared before?) If it be proper and right to make it in one case, it is equally proper and right to do it in the other case. Length of time can make no difference in the right to do it at any time. But, instead of doing this, they go on as their predecessors went on before them, to tell the people there are prophecies of Jesus Christ, when the truth is there are none.

They tell us that Jesus rose from the dead, and ascended into heaven. It is very easy to say so; a great lie is as easily told as a little one. But if he had done so, those would have been the only circumstances respecting him that would have differed from the common lot of man; and, consequently, the only case that would apply exclusively to him, as prophecy, would be some passage in the Old Testament that foretold such things of him. But there is not a passage in the Old Testament that speaks of a person, who, after being crucified, dead, and buried, should rise from the dead, and ascend into heaven. Our prophecy-mongers supply the silence the Old Testament guards upon such things, by telling us of passages they call prophecies, and that falsely so, about Joseph's dream, old clothes, broken bones, and such like trifling stuff.

In writing upon this, as upon every other subject, I speak a language full and intelligible. I deal not in hints and intimations. I have several reasons for this: First, that I may be clearly understood. Secondly, that it may be seen I am in earnest. And thirdly, because it is an affront to truth to treat falsehood with complaisance.

I will close this treatise with a subject I have already touched upon in the First Part of the *Age of Reason*.

The world has been amused with the term *revealed religion*, and the generality of priests apply this term to the books called the Old and New Testament. The Mahometans apply the same term to the Koran. There is no man that believes in revealed religion stronger than I do; but it is not the reveries of the Old and New Testament, nor of the Koran, that I dignify with that sacred title. That which is revelation to me, exists in something which no human mind can invent, no human hand can counterfeit or alter.

The *Word of God* is the *Creation* we behold; and this word of God revealeth to man all that is necessary for man to know of his Creator.

Do we want to contemplate his power? We see it in the immensity of his creation.

Do we want to contemplate his wisdom? We see it in the unchangeable order by which the incomprehensible whole is governed.

Do we want to contemplate his munificence? We see it in the abundance with which he fills the earth.

Do we want to contemplate his mercy? We see it in his not withholding that abundance, even from the unthankful.

Do we want to contemplate his will, so far as it respects man? The goodness he shows to all, is a lesson for our conduct to each other.

In fine—Do we want to know what God is? Search not the book called the Scripture, which any human hand might make, or any impostor invent; but the scripture called the Creation.

When, in the first part of the Age of Reason, I called the Creation the true revelation of God to man, I did not know that any other person had expressed the same idea. But I lately met with the writings of Doctor Conyers Middleton, published the beginning of last century, in which he expresses himself in the same manner with respect to the creation, as I have done in the Age of Reason.

He was principal librarian of the University of Cambridge, in England, which furnished him with extensive opportunities of reading, and necessarily required he should be well acquainted with the dead as well as the living languages. He was a man of a strong original mind; had the courage to think for himself, and the honesty to speak his thoughts.

He made a journey to Rome, from whence he wrote letters to show that the forms and ceremonies of the Romish Christian Church were taken from the degenerate state of the heathen mythology, as it stood in the latter times of the Greeks and Romans. He attacked without ceremony the miracles which the church pretend to perform; and in one of his treatises, he calls the creation a *revelation*. The priests of England of that day, in order to defend their citadel by first defending its outworks, attacked him for attacking the Roman ceremonies; and *one of them* censures him for calling the *creation* a *revelation* —*he thus replies* to him:

"*One of them*," says he, "appears to be scandalized by the

title of *revelation*, which I have given to that discovery which God made of himself in the visible works of his creation. Yet it is no other than what the wise in all ages have given to it, who consider it as the most authentic and indisputable revelation which God has ever given of himself, from the beginning of the world to this day. It was this by which the first notice of him was revealed to the inhabitants of the earth, and by which alone it has been kept up ever since among the several nations of it. From this the reason of man was enabled to trace out his nature and attributes, and, by a gradual deduction of consequences, to learn his own nature also, with all the duties belonging to it which relate either to God or to his fellow-creatures. This constitution of things was ordained by God, as an universal law or rule of conduct to man—the source of all his knowledge—the test of all truth, by which all subsequent revelations, which are supposed to have been given by God in any other manner, must be tried, and cannot be received as divine any further than as they are found to tally and coincide with this original standard.

"It was this divine law which I referred to in the passage above recited (meaning the passage on which they had attacked him), being desirous to excite the reader's attention to it, as it would enable him to judge more freely of the argument I was handling. For by contemplating this law, he would discover the genuine way which God himself has marked out to us for the acquisition of true knowledge; not from the authority or reports of our fellow-creatures, but from the information of the facts and material objects which in his providential distribution of worldly things, he hath presented to the perpetual observation of our senses. For as it was from these that his existence and nature, the most important articles of all knowledge, were first discovered to man, so that grand discovery furnished new light towards tracing out the rest, and made all the inferior subjects of human knowledge more easily discoverable to us by the same method.

"I had another view likewise in the same passages, and applicable to the same end, of giving the reader a more enlarged notion of the question in dispute, who, by turning his thoughts to reflect on the works of the Creator, as they are manifested to us in this fabric of the world, could not fail to *observe, that they* are all of them great, noble, and suitable

to the majesty of his nature, carrying with them the proofs of their origin, and showing themselves to be the production of an all-wise and Almighty being; and by accustoming his mind to these sublime reflections, he will be prepared to determine, whether those miraculous interpositions so confidently affirmed to us by the primitive fathers, can reasonably be thought to make a part in the grand scheme of the divine administration, or whether it be agreeable that God, who created all things by his will, and can give what turn to them he pleases by the same will, should, for the particular purposes of his government and the services of the church, *descend to the expedient of visions and revelations*, granted sometimes to boys for the instruction of the elders, and sometimes to women to settle the fashion and length of their veils, and sometimes to pastors of the church, to enjoin them to ordain one man a lecturer, another a priest;—or that he should scatter a profusion of miracles around the stake of a martyr, yet all of them vain and insignificant, and without any sensible effect, either of preserving the life, or easing the sufferings of the saint; or even of mortifying his persecutors, who were always left to enjoy the full triumph of their cruelty, and the poor martyr to expire in a miserable death. When these things, I say, are brought to the original test, and compared with the genuine and indisputable works of the Creator, how minute, how trifling, how contemptible must they be!—and how incredible must it be thought, that for the instruction of his church, God should employ ministers so precarious, unsatisfactory, and inadequate, as the ecstasies of women and boys, and the visions of interested priests, which were derided at the very time by men of sense to whom they were proposed!

"That this universal law (continues Middleton, meaning the law revealed in the works of the creation) was actually revealed to the heathen world long before the gospel was known, we learn from all the principal sages of antiquity, who made it the capital subject of their studies and writings.

"Cicero has given us a short abstract of it in a fragment still remaining from one of his books on government, which I *shall* here transcribe in his own words, as they will illustrate *my sense also*, in the passages that appear so dark and dangerous to my antagonists."

"The true law (says Cicero) is right reason conformable to the nature of things, constant, eternal, diffused through all, which calls us to duty by commanding—deters us from sin by forbidding; which never loses its influence with the good, nor ever preserves it with the wicked. This law cannot be overruled by any other, nor abrogated in whole or in part; nor can we be absolved from it either by the senate or by the people; nor are we to seek any other comment or interpreter of it but itself; nor can there be one law at Rome and another at Athens—one now and another hereafter; but the same eternal immutable law comprehends all nations at all times, under one common master and governor of all—GOD. He is the inventor, propounder, enacter, of this law; and whoever will not obey it must first renounce himself and throw off the nature of man; by doing which, he will suffer the greatest punishments, though he should escape all the other torments which are commonly believed to be prepared for the wicked." Here ends the quotation from Cicero.

"Our Doctors (continues Middleton) perhaps will look on this as RANK DEISM; but let them call it what they will, I shall ever avow and defend it as the fundamental, essential, and vital part of all true religion." Here ends the quotation from Middleton.

I have here given the reader two sublime extracts from men who lived in ages of time far remote from each other, but who thought alike. Cicero lived before the time in which they tell us Christ was born. Middleton may be called a man of our own time, as he lived within the same century with ourselves.

In Cicero we see that vast superiority of mind, that sublimity of right reasoning and justness of ideas which man acquires, not by studying Bibles and Testaments, and the theology of schools, built thereon, but by studying the Creator in the immensity and unchangeable order of his creation, and the immutability of his law. "*There cannot,*" says Cicero, "*be one law now, and another hereafter; but the same eternal immutable law comprehends all nations, at all times, under one common master and governor of all*—GOD." But according to the doctrine of schools which priests have set up, we see one law, called the Old Testament, given in one age of the world, and another law, called the New Testament, given in another age of the world. As all this is contradictory to the

eternal immutable nature, and the unerring and unchangeable wisdom of God, we must be compelled to hold this doctrine to be false, and the old and the new law, called the Old and the New Testament, to be impositions, fables, and forgeries.

In Middleton, we see the manly eloquence of an enlarged mind, and the genuine sentiments of a true believer in his Creator. Instead of reposing his faith on books, by whatever name they may be called, whether Old Testament or New, he fixes the creation as the great original standard by which every other thing called the word, or work of God, is to be tried. In this we have an indisputable scale, whereby to measure every word or work imputed to him. If the thing so imputed carries not in itself the evidence of the same Almightiness of power, of the same unerring truth and wisdom, and the same unchangeable order in all its parts, as are visibly demonstrated to our senses, and comprehensible by our reason, in the magnificent fabric of the universe, that word or that work is not of God. Let then the two books called the Old and New Testament be tried by this rule, and the result will be, that the authors of them, whoever they were, will be convicted of forgery.

The invariable principles, and unchangeable order, which regulate the movements of all the parts that compose the universe, demonstrate both to our senses and our reason that its creator is a God of unerring truth. But the Old Testament, besides the numberless, absurd, and bagatelle stories it tells of God, represents him as a God of deceit, a God not to be confided in. Ezekiel makes God to say, chap. 14, ver. 9, "And if the prophet be deceived when he hath spoken a thing, I, *the Lord, have deceived that prophet.*" And at the 20th chap. ver. 25, he makes God in speaking of the children of Israel to say, "*Wherefore I gave them statutes that were not good, and judgments by which they could not live.*"

This, so far from being the word of God, is horrid blasphemy against him. Reader, put thy confidence in thy God, and put no trust in the Bible.

The same Old Testament, after telling us that God created the heavens and the earth in six days, makes the same almighty power and eternal wisdom employ itself in giving directions *how a priest's* garments should be cut, and what sort of stuff *they should* be made of, and what their offerings should be,

gold, and silver, and brass, and blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine linen, and goats' hair, and rams' skins dyed red, and badger skins, &c., chap. xxv. ver. 3; and in one of the pretended prophecies I have just examined, God is made to give directions how they should kill, cook, and eat a he-lamb or a he-goat. And Ezekiel, chap. iv., to fill up the measure of abominable absurdity, makes God to order him to take "*wheat, and barley, and beans, and lentiles, and millet, and fitches, and make a loaf or a cake thereof and bake it with human dung and eat it;*" but as Ezekiel complained that this mess was too strong for his stomach, the matter was compromised from man's dung to cow dung, Ezekiel, chap. iv. Compare all this ribaldry, blasphemously called the word of God, with the Almighty power that created the universe, and whose eternal wisdom directs and governs all its mighty movements, and we shall be at a loss to find a name sufficiently contemptible for it.

In the promises which the Old Testament pretends that God made to his people, the same derogatory ideas of him prevail. It makes God to promise to Abraham, that his seed should be like the stars in heaven and the sand on the seashore for multitude, and that he would give them the land of Canaan as their inheritance for ever. But observe, reader, how the performance of this promise was to begin, and then ask thine own reason, if the wisdom of God, whose power is equal to his will, could, consistently with that power and that wisdom, make such a promise.

The performance of the promise was to begin, according to that book, by four hundred years of bondage and affliction. Genesis, chap. xv. ver. 13, "*And God said unto Abraham, know of a surety, that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them, and they shall afflict them four hundred years.*" This promise then to Abraham, and his seed for ever, to inherit the land of Canaan, had it been a fact instead of a fable, was to operate, in the commencement of it, as a curse upon all the people and their children, and their children's children, for four hundred years.

But the case is, the book of Genesis was written after the bondage in Egypt had taken place; and in order to get rid of the disgrace of the Lord's chosen people, as they called themselves, being in bondage to the Gentiles, they make God to be

the author of it, and annex it as a condition to a pretended promise; as if God, in making that promise, had exceeded his power in performing it, and consequently his wisdom in making it, and was obliged to compromise with them for one half, and with the Egyptians, to whom they were to be in bondage, for the other half.

Without degrading my own reason by bringing those wretched and contemptible tales into a comparative view, with the Almighty power and eternal wisdom, which the Creator hath demonstrated to our senses in the creation of the universe, I will confine myself to say, that if we compare them with the divine and forcible sentiments of Cicero, the result will be, that the human mind has degenerated by believing them. Man in a state of grovelling superstition, from which he has not courage to rise, loses the energy of his mental powers.

I will not tire the reader with more observations on the Old Testament.

As to the New Testament, if it be brought and tried by that standard, which, as Middleton wisely says, God has revealed to our senses, of his Almighty power and wisdom in the creation and government of the visible universe, it will be found equally as false, paltry, and absurd, as the Old.

Without entering, in this place, into any other argument, that the story of Christ is of human invention, and not of divine origin, I will confine myself to show that it is derogatory to God, by the contrivance of it; because the means it supposes God to use, are not adequate to the end to be obtained; and therefore are derogatory to the Almightiness of his power, and the eternity of his wisdom.

The New Testament supposes that God sent his Son upon earth to make a new covenant with man, which the church calls *the covenant of Grace*, and to instruct mankind in a new doctrine, which it calls *Faith*, meaning thereby, not faith in God, for Cicero and all true Deists always had and always will have this; but faith in the person called Jesus Christ, and that whoever had not this faith should, to use the words of the New Testament, be DAMNED.

Now, if this were a fact, it is consistent with that attribute of God, called his *Goodness*, that no time should be lost in letting poor unfortunate man know it; and as that goodness was united to Almighty power, and that power to Almighty

wisdom, all the means existed in the hand of the Creator to make it known immediately over the whole earth, in a manner suitable to the Almightiness of his divine nature, and with evidence that would not leave man in doubt; for it is always incumbent upon us, in all cases, to believe that the Almighty always acts, not by imperfect means as imperfect man acts, but consistently with his Almightiness. It is this only that can become the infallible criterion by which we can possibly distinguish the works of God from the works of man.

Observe now, reader, how the comparison between the supposed mission of Christ, on the belief or disbelief of which they say man was to be saved or damned—observe, I say, how the comparison between this and the Almighty power and wisdom of God demonstrated to our senses in the visible creation, goes on.

The Old Testament tells us that God created the heavens and the earth, and everything therein, in six days. The term *six days* is ridiculous enough when applied to God; but leaving out that absurdity, it contains the idea of Almighty power acting unitedly with Almighty wisdom, to produce an immense work, that of the creation of the universe and everything therein, in a short time.

Now as the eternal salvation of man is of much greater importance than his creation, and as that salvation depends, as the New Testament tells us, on man's knowledge of, and belief in, the person called Jesus Christ, it necessarily follows from our belief in the goodness and justice of God, and our knowledge of his almighty power and wisdom, as demonstrated in the creation, that ALL THIS, if true, would be made known to all parts of the world, in as little time, at least, as was employed in making the world. To suppose the Almighty would pay greater regard and attention to the creation and organization of inanimate matter, than he would to the salvation of innumerable millions of souls, which himself had created, "*as the image of himself*," is to offer an insult to his goodness and his justice.

Now observe, reader, how the promulgation of this pretended salvation by a knowledge of, and a belief in Jesus Christ went on, compared with the work of creation.

In the first *place*, it took longer time to make a child than *to make the world*, for nine months were passed away and

totally lost in a state of pregnancy; which is more than forty times longer time than God employed in making the world, according to the Bible account. Secondly; several years of Christ's life were lost in a state of human infancy. But the universe was in maturity the moment it existed. Thirdly; Christ, as Luke asserts, was thirty years old before he began to preach what they call his mission. Millions of souls died in the meantime without knowing it. Fourthly; it was above three hundred years from that time before the book called the New Testament was compiled into a written copy, before which time there was no such book. Fifthly; it was above a thousand years after that, before it could be circulated; because neither Jesus nor his apostles had knowledge of, or were inspired with the art of printing: and consequently as the means for making it universally known did not exist, the means were not equal to the end, and therefore it is not the work of God.

I will here subjoin the nineteenth Psalm, which is truly deistical, to show how universally and instantaneously the works of God make themselves known, compared with this pretended salvation by Jesus Christ.

Psalm 19th. "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handy work—Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge—There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard—Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. In them hath he set a chamber for the Sun, which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race—his going forth is from the end of the heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it, and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof."

Now, had the news of salvation by Jesus Christ been inscribed on the face of the Sun and the Moon, in characters that all nations would have understood, the whole earth had known it in twenty-four hours, and all nations would have believed it; whereas though it is now almost two thousand years since, as they tell us, Christ came upon earth, not a twentieth part of the people of the earth know anything of it, *and among* those who do, the wiser part do not believe it.

I have now, reader, gone through all the passages called *prophecies* of Jesus Christ, and shown there is no such thing.

I have examined the story told of Jesus Christ, and compared the several circumstances of it with that revelation, which, as Middleton wisely says, God has made to us of his Power and Wisdom in the structure of the universe, and by which everything ascribed to him is to be tried. The result is, that the story of Christ has not one trait, either in its character or in the means employed, that bears the least resemblance to the power and wisdom of God, as demonstrated in the creation of the universe. All the means are human means, slow, uncertain, and inadequate to the accomplishment of the end proposed, and therefore the whole is a fabulous invention, and undeserving of credit.

The priests of the present day profess to believe it. They gain their living by it, and they exclaim against something they call infidelity. I will define what it is. HE THAT BELIEVES IN THE STORY OF CHRIST IS AN INFIDEL TO GOD.

THOMAS PAINE.

APPENDIX.

CONTRADICTORY DOCTRINES IN THE NEW TESTAMENT BETWEEN MATTHEW AND MARK.

In the New Testament, Mark, chap. xvi., ver. 16, it is said, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; he that believeth not shall be damned." This is making salvation, or in other words, the happiness of man after this life, to depend entirely on believing, or on what Christians call faith.

But the 25th chapter of *The Gospel according to Matthew* makes Jesus Christ to preach a direct contrary doctrine to *The Gospel according to Mark;* for it makes salvation, or the future happiness of man, to depend entirely on *good works;* and those good works are not works done to God, for he needs them not, but good works done to man.

The passage referred to in Matthew is the account there given of what is called the last day, or the day of judgment, where the whole world is represented to be divided into two parts, the righteous and the unrighteous, metaphorically called the *sheep* and the *goats.*

To the one part, called the righteous, or the sheep, it says, "Come, ye blessed of my father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the beginning of the world—for I was an hungered and ye gave me meat—I was thirsty and ye gave me drink—I was a stranger and ye took me in—Naked and ye clothed me—I was sick and ye visited me—I was in prison and ye *came unto me.*

"*Then shall* the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when *saw we thee* an hungered and fed thee, or thirsty and gave

thee drink? When saw we thee a stranger and took thee in, or naked and clothed thee? Or when saw we thee sick and in prison, and came unto thee?

"And the king shall answer and say unto them, *Verily I say unto you, in as much as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.*"

Here is nothing about believing in Christ—nothing about that phantom of the imagination called *Faith*. The works here spoken of, are works of humanity and benevolence, or in other words, an endeavour to make God's creation happy Here is nothing about preaching and making long prayers, as if God must be dictated to by man; nor about building churches and meetings, nor hiring priests to pray and preach in them. Here is nothing about predestination, that lust which some men have for damning one another. Here is nothing about baptism, whether by sprinkling or plunging, nor about any of those ceremonies for which the Christian church has been fighting, persecuting, and burning each other, ever since the Christian church began.

If it be asked, why do not priests preach the doctrine contained in this chapter? The answer is easy;—they are not fond of practising it themselves. It does not answer for their trade. They had rather get than give. Charity with them begins and ends at home.

Had it been said, *Come, ye blessed, ye have been liberal in paying the preachers of the word, ye have contributed largely towards building churches and meeting-houses*, there is not a hired priest in Christendom but would have thundered it continually in the ears of his congregation. But as it is altogether on good works done to men, the priests pass over it in silence, and they will abuse me for bringing it into notice.

THOMAS PAINE.

MY

PRIVATE THOUGHTS

ON A

FUTURE STATE.

I HAVE said in the first part of the Age of Reason, that "*I hope for happiness after this life.*" This hope is comfortable to me, and I presume not to go beyond the comfortable idea of hope, with respect to a future state.

I consider myself in the hands of my Creator, and that he will dispose of me after this life, consistently with his justice and goodness. I leave all these matters to him as my Creator and friend, and I hold it to be presumption in man to make an article of faith as to what the Creator will do with us hereafter.

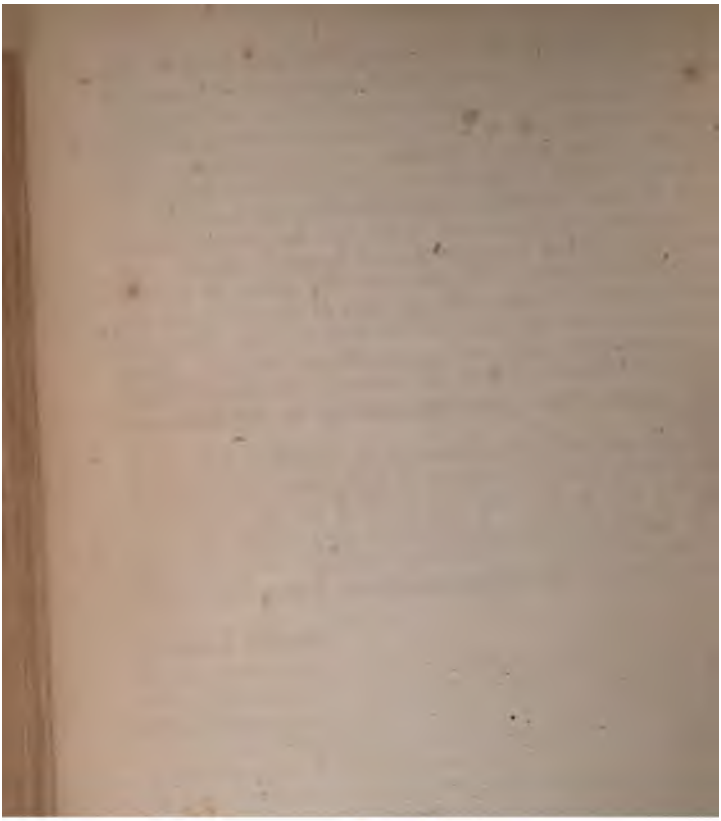
I do not believe because a man and a woman make a child, that it imposes on the Creator the unavoidable obligation of keeping the being so made in eternal existence hereafter. It is in his power to do so, or not to do so, and it is not in our power to decide which he will do.

The book called the New Testament, which I hold to be fabulous, and have shown to be false, gives an account in the 25th chapter of Matthew, of what is there called the last day, or the day of judgment. The whole world, according to that account, is divided into two parts, the righteous and the unrighteous, figuratively called the sheep and the goats. They are then to receive their sentence. To the one, figuratively called the sheep, it says, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, *inherit* the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of *the world.*" To the other, figuratively called the goats, it *says*, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, *prepared for* the devil and his angels."

Now the case is, the world cannot be thus divided—the moral world, like the physical world, is composed of numerous degrees of character, running imperceptibly one into the other, in such a manner that no fixed point of division can be found in either. That point is nowhere, or is everywhere. The whole world might be divided into two parts numerically, but not as to moral character; and therefore the metaphor of dividing them, as sheep and goats can be divided, whose difference is marked by their external figure, is absurd. All sheep are still sheep; all goats are still goats; it is their physical nature to be so. But one part of the world are not all good alike, nor the other part all wicked alike. There are some exceedingly good; others exceedingly wicked. There is another description of men who cannot be ranked with either the one or the other—they belong neither to the sheep nor the goats.

My own opinion is, that those whose lives have been spent in doing good, and endeavouring to make their fellow mortals happy, for this is the only way in which we can serve God, *will be happy hereafter;* and that the very wicked will meet with some punishment. This is my opinion. It is consistent with my idea of God's justice, and with the reason that God has given me.

THOMAS PAINE.



EXTRACT FROM A REPLY

TO THE

BISHOP OF LLANDAFF.

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his extract from Mr. Paine's reply to Watson, Bishop of Llandaff, given by him, not long before his death, to Mrs. Palmer, widow Iihu Palmer. He retained the work entire, and therefore must transcribed this part, which was unusual for him to do. Pro- y he had discovered errors, which he corrected in the copy. Mrs. ıer presented it to the editor of a periodical work entitled the philanthropist, published in New York, in which it appeared in .]

GENESIS.

HE Bishop says, "the oldest book in the world is Genesis." is mere assertion; he offers no proof of it, and I go to rovert it, and to show that the book of Job, which is not ebrew book, but is a book of the Gentiles, translated into rew, is much older than the book of Genesis.

he book of Genesis means the book of Generations; to ːh are prefixed two chapters, the first and second, which ain two different cosmogonies, that is, two different ac- ıts of the creation of the world, written by different per- , as I have shown in the preceding part of this work.*

he first cosmogony begins at the first verse of the first ːter, and ends at the end of the third verse of the second ːter; for the adverbial conjunction *thus*, with which the nd chapter begins, shows those three verses to belong to first chapter. The second cosmogony begins at the fourth e of the second chapter, and ends with that chapter.

*See Letter to Erskine, page 73.

In the first cosmogony the name of God is used without any epithet joined to it, and is repeated thirty-five times. In the second cosmogony it is always the Lord God, which is repeated eleven times. These two different styles of expression show these two chapters to be the work of two different persons, and the contradictions they contain, show they cannot be the work of one and the same person, as I have already shown.

The third chapter, in which the style of Lord God is continued in every instance, except in the supposed conversation between the woman and the serpent (for in every place in that chapter where the writer speaks, it is always the Lord God), shows this chapter to belong to the second cosmogony.

This chapter gives an account of what is called the fall of man, which is no other than a fable borrowed from, and constructed upon the religion of Zoroaster, or the Persians, or the annual progress of the sun through the twelve signs of the Zodiac. It is the *fall of the year*, the approach and *evil* of winter, announced by the ascension of the autumnal constellation of the *serpent* of the Zodiac, and not the moral *fall of man*, that is the key of the allegory, and of the fable in Genesis borrowed from it.

The fall of man in Genesis, is said to have been produced by eating a certain fruit, generally taken to be an apple. The fall of the year is the season for gathering and eating the new apples of that year. The allegory, therefore, holds with respect to the fruit, which it would not have done had it been an early summer fruit. It holds also with respect to place. The tree is said to have been placed in the *midst* of the garden. But why in the midst of the garden more than any other place? The solution of the allegory gives the answer to this question, which is, that the fall of the year, when apples and other autumnal fruits are ripe, and when days and nights are of equal length, is the mid-season between summer and winter.

It holds also with respect to clothing, and the temperature of the air. It is said in Genesis, chap. iii. ver. 21, "*Unto Adam and his wife did the Lord God make coats of skins and clothed them.*" But why are coats of skins mentioned? *This* cannot be understood as referring to anything of the *nature of moral evil.* The solution of the allegory gives again

the answer to this question, which is, that the *evil of winter*, which follows the *fall of the year*, fabulously called in Genesis the *fall of man*, makes warm clothing necessary.

But of these things I shall speak fully when I come in another part to treat of the ancient religion of the Persians, and compare it with the modern religion of the New Testament.* At present, I shall confine myself to the comparative antiquity of the books of Genesis and Job, taking, at the same time, whatever I may find in my way with respect to the fabulousness of the book of Genesis; for if what is called the fall of man in Genesis be fabulous or allegorical, that which is called the redemption in the New Testament cannot be a fact. It is morally impossible, and impossible also in the nature of things, that *moral good* can redeem *physical evil*. I return to the Bishop.

If Genesis be, as the Bishop asserts, the oldest book in the world, and, consequently, the oldest and first written book of the Bible, and if the extraordinary things related in it, such as the creation of the world in six days, the tree of life, and of good and evil, the story of Eve and the talking serpent, the fall of man and his being turned out of Paradise, were facts, or even believed by the Jews to be facts, they would be referred to as fundamental matters, and that very frequently in the books of the Bible that were written by various authors afterwards; whereas there is not a book, chapter, or verse of the Bible, from the time Moses is said to have written the book of Genesis, to the book of Malachi, the last book in the Bible, including a space of more than a thousand years, in which there is any mention made of these things, or any of them, nor are they so much as alluded to. How will the Bishop solve this difficulty, which stands as a circumstantial contradiction to his assertion?

There are but two ways of solving it:

First, that the book of Genesis is not an ancient book; that it has been written by some (now) unknown person after the return of the Jews from the Babylonian captivity, about a thousand years after the time that Moses is said to have lived, and put as a preface or introduction to the other books, when they were formed into a canon in the time of the second

* Not published.

temple, and therefore, not having existed before that time, none of these things mentioned in it could be referred to in those books.

Secondly, that admitting Genesis to have been written by Moses, the Jews did not believe the things stated in it to be true, and, therefore, as they could not refer to them as facts, they would not refer to them as fables. The first of these solutions goes against the antiquity of the book, and the second against its authenticity, and the Bishop may take which he pleases.

But be the author of Genesis whoever he may, there is abundant evidence to show, as well from the early Christian writers, as from the Jews themselves, that the things stated in that book were not believed to be facts. Why they have been believed as facts since that time, when better and fuller knowledge existed on the case, than is known now, can be accounted for only on the imposition of priestcraft.

Augustine, one of the early champions of the Christian church, acknowledges in his *City of God*, that the adventure of Eve and the serpent, and the account of Paradise, were generally considered as fiction or allegory. He regards them as allegory himself, without attempting to give any explanation; but he supposes that a better explanation might be found than those that had been offered.

Origen, another early champion of the church, says, "What man of good sense can ever persuade himself that there were a first, a second, and a third day, and that each of these days had a night, when there were yet neither sun, moon, nor stars? What man can be stupid enough to believe that God, acting the part of a gardener, had planted a garden in the east, that the tree of life was a real tree, and that its fruit had the virtue of making those who eat of it live for ever?"

Maimonides, one of the most learned and celebrated of the Jewish Rabbins, who lived in the eleventh century (about seven or eight hundred years ago), and to whom the Bishop refers in his answer to me, is very explicit, in his book entitled *More Nebachim*, upon the non-reality of the things stated in the account of the Creation in the book of Genesis.

"We ought not (says he) to understand, nor take according to the letter, that which is written in the book of the Creation, nor to have the same ideas of it with common men;

otherwise, our ancient sages would not have recommended, with so much care, to conceal the sense of it, and not to raise the allegorical veil which envelopes the truth it contains. The book of Genesis, taken according to the letter, gives the most absurd and the most extravagant ideas of the Divinity. Whoever shall find out the sense of it, ought to restrain himself from divulging it. It is a maxim which all our sages repeat, and above all with respect to the work of six days. It may happen that some one, with the aid he may borrow from others, may hit upon the meaning of it. In that case, he ought to impose silence upon himself; or if he speak of it, he ought to speak obscurely, and in an enigmatical manner, as I do myself, leaving the rest to be found out by those who can understand."

This is, certainly, a very extraordinary declaration of Maimonides, taking all the parts of it.

First, he declares, that the account of the Creation in the book of Genesis is not a fact; that to believe it to be a fact, gives the most absurd and the most extravagant ideas of the Divinity.

Secondly, that it is an allegory.

Thirdly, that the allegory has a concealed secret.

Fourthly, that whoever can find the secret ought not to tell it.

It is this last part that is the most extraordinary. Why all this care of the Jewish Rabbins, to prevent what they call the concealed meaning, or the secret, from being known, and if known, to prevent any of their people from telling it? It certainly must be something which the Jewish nation are afraid or ashamed the word should know. It must be something personal to them as a people, and not a secret of a divine nature, which the more it is known, the more it increases the glory of the Creator, and the gratitude and happiness of man. It is not God's secret, but their own, they are keeping. I go to unveil the secret.

The case is, the Jews have stolen their cosmogony, that is, their account of the Creation, from the cosmogony of the Persians, contained in the book of Zoroaster, the Persian lawgiver, and brought it with them when they returned from captivity by the benevolence of Cyrus, King of Persia; for it *is evident, from the silence* of all the books of the Bible upon

the subject of the Creation, that the Jews had no cosmogony before that time. If they had a cosmogony from the time of Moses, some of their judges who governed during more than four hundred years, or of their kings, the Davids and Solomons of their day, who governed nearly five hundred years, or of their prophets and psalmists, who lived in the meantime, would have mentioned it. It would, either as fact or fable, have been the grandest of all subjects for a psalm. It would have suited to a tittle the ranting, poetical genius of Isaiah, or served as a cordial to the gloomy Jeremiah. But not one word nor even a whisper, does any of the Bible authors give upon the subject.

To conceal the theft, the Rabbins of the second temple have published Genesis as a book of Moses, and have enjoined secrecy to all their people, who, by travelling or otherwise, might happen to discover from whence the cosmogony was borrowed, not to tell it. The evidence of circumstances is often unanswerable, and there is no other than this which I have given that goes to the whole of the case, and this does.

Diogenes Laertius, an ancient and respectable author, whom the Bishop, in his answer to me, quotes on another occasion, has a passage that corresponds with the solution here given. In speaking of the religion of the Persians, as promulgated by their priests or magi, he says the Jewish Rabbins were the successors of their doctrine. Having thus spoken on the plagiarism, and on the non-reality of the book of Genesis, I will give some additional evidence that Moses is not the author of that book.

Eben-Ezra, a celebrated Jewish author, who lived about seven hundred years ago, and whom the Bishop allows to have been a man of great erudition, has made a great many observations, too numerous to be repeated here, to show that Moses was not, and could not be, the author of the book of Genesis, nor any of the five books that bear his name.

Spinosa, another learned Jew, who lived about a hundred and thirty years ago, recites, in his Treatise on the Ceremonies of the Jews, Ancient and Modern, the observations of Eben-Ezra, to which he adds many others, to show that Moses *is not the* author of these books. He so says, and shows his *reasons* for saying it, that the Bible did not exist, as a book, *till the time* of the Maccabees, which was more than a hun-

dred years after the return of the Jews from the Babylonian captivity.

In the second part of the Age of Reason, I have, among other things, referred to nine verses in the 36th chapter of Genesis, beginning at the 31st verse, "These are the kings that reigned in Edom, before there reigned any king over the children of Israel," which it is impossible could have been written by Moses, or in the time of Moses, and could not have been written till after the Jew kings began to reign in Israel, which was not till several hundred years after the time of Moses.

The Bishop allows this, and says, "I think you say true." But he then quibbles, and says, that a small addition to a book does not destroy either the genuineness or authenticity of the whole book. This is priestcraft. These verses do not stand in the book as an addition to it, but as making a part of the whole book, and which it is impossible that Moses could write. The Bishop would reject the antiquity of any other book, if it could be proved from the words of the book itself that a part of it could not have been written till several hundred years after the reputed author of it was dead. He would call such a book a forgery. I am authorized, therefore, to call the book of Genesis a forgery.

Combining, then, all the foregoing circumstances together respecting the antiquity and authenticity of the book of Genesis, a conclusion will naturally follow therefrom; those circumstances are,—

First, that certain parts of the book cannot possibly have been written by Moses, and that the other parts carry no evidence of having been written by him.

Secondly, the universal silence of all the following books of the Bible, for about a thousand years, upon the extraordinary things spoken of in Genesis, such as the creation of the world in six days; the garden of Eden; the tree of knowledge; the tree of life; the story of Eve and the serpent; the fall of man, and his being turned out of this fine garden, together with Noah's flood, and the tower of Babel.

Thirdly, the silence of all the books of the Bible upon even the name of Moses, from the book of Joshua until the second book of Kings, which was not written till after the captivity, for it gives an account of the captivity, a period of about a

thousand years. Strange, that a man who is proclaimed as the historian of the Creation, the privy-counsellor and confidant of the Almighty—the legislator of the Jewish nation, and the founder of its religion; strange, I say, that even the name of such a man should not find a place in their books for a thousand years, if they knew or believed anything about him, or the books he is said to have written.

Fourthly, the opinion of some of the most celebrated of the Jewish commentators, that Moses is not the author of the book of Genesis, founded on the reasons given for that opinion.

Fifthly, the opinion of the early Christian writers, and of the great champion of Jewish literature, Maimonides, that the book of Genesis is not a book of facts.

Sixthly, the silence imposed by all the Jewish Rabbins, and by Maimonides himself, upon the Jewish nation, not to speak of anything they may happen to know, or discover, respecting the cosmogony (or creation of the world) in the book of Genesis.

From these circumstances, the following conclusions offer:

First, that the book of Genesis is not a book of facts.

Secondly, that as no mention is made throughout the Bible of any of the extraordinary things related in Genesis, that it has not been written till after the other books were written, and put as a preface to the Bible. Every one knows that a preface to a book, though it stands first, is the last written.

Thirdly, that the silence imposed by all the Jewish Rabbins, and by Maimonides upon the Jewish nation, to keep silence upon everything related in their cosmogony, evinces a secret they are not willing should be known. The secret therefore explains itself to be, that when the Jews were in captivity in Babylon and Persia, they became acquainted with the cosmogony of the Persians, as registered in the Zend-Avesta, of Zoroaster, the Persian lawgiver, which, after their return from captivity, they manufactured and modelled as their own, and ante-dated it by giving to it the name of Moses. The case admits of no other explanation. From all which, it appears, that the book of Genesis, instead of being the *oldest book in the world*, as the Bishop calls it, has been the last-written *book of the* Bible, and that the cosmogony it contains has *been manufactured*.

On the Names in the Book of Genesis.

Everything in Genesis serves as evidence or symptom, that the book has been composed in some late period of the Jewish nation. Even the names mentioned in it serve to this purpose.

Nothing is more common or more natural, than to name the children of succeeding generations after the names of those who had been celebrated in some former generation. This holds good with respect to all the people, and all the histories we know of, and it does not hold good with the Bible. There must be some cause for this.

This book of Genesis tells us of a man whom it calls Adam, and of his sons Abel and Seth; of Enoch, who lived 365 years (it is exactly the number of days in a year), and that then God took him up. It has the appearance of being taken from some allegory of the Gentiles on the commencement and termination of the year, by the progress of the sun through the twelve signs of the Zodiac, on which the allegorical religion of the Gentiles was founded.

It tells us of Methuselah, who lived 969 years, and of a long train of other names in the fifth chapter. It then passes on to a man whom it calls Noah, and his sons, Shem, Ham, and Japhet: then to Lot, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and his sons, with which the book of Genesis finishes.

All these, according to the account given in that book, were the most extraordinary and celebrated of men. They were, moreover, heads of families. Adam was the father of the world. Enoch, for his righteousness, was taken up to heaven. Methuselah lived to almost a thousand years. He was the son of Enoch, the man of 365, the number of days in a year. It has the appearance of being the continuation of an allegory on the 365 days of a year, and its abundant productions. Noah was selected from all the world to be preserved when it was drowned, and became the second father of the world. Abraham was the father of the faithful multitude. Isaac and Jacob were the inheritors of his fame, and the last was the father of the twelve tribes.

Now, if these very wonderful men, and their names, and the book *that records them*, had been known by the Jews be-

fore the Babylonian captivity, those names would have been as common among the Jews before that period as they have been since. We now hear of thousands of Abrahams, Isaacs, and Jacobs among the Jews, but there were none of that name before the Babylonian captivity. The Bible does not mention one, though from the time that Abraham is said to have lived, to the time of the Babylonian captivity, is about 1400 years.

How is it to be accounted for that there have been so many thousands, and perhaps hundreds of thousands of Jews of the names of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob since that period, and not one before? It can be accounted for but one way, which is, that before the Babylonian captivity the Jews had no such books as Genesis, nor knew anything of the names and persons it mentions, nor of the things it relates, and that the stories in it have been manufactured since that time. From the Arabic name *Ibrahim* (which is the manner the Turks write that name to this day) the Jews have, most probably, manufactured their Abraham.

I will advance my observations a point further, and speak of the names of *Moses* and *Aaron*, mentioned for the first time in the book of Exodus. There are now, and have continued to be, from the time of the Babylonian captivity, or soon after it, thousands of Jews of the names of *Moses* and *Aaron*, and we read not of any of that name before that time. The Bible does not mention one. The direct inference from this is, that the Jews knew of no such book as Exodus before the Babylonian captivity. In fact, that it did not exist before that time, and that it is only since the book has been invented, that the names of *Moses* and *Aaron* have been common among the Jews.

It is applicable to the purpose to observe, that the picturesque work, called *Mosaic-work*, spelled the same as you would say the *Mosaic* account of the Creation, is not derived from the word *Moses*, but from *Muses* (the *Muses*), because of the variegated and picturesque pavement in the temples dedicated to the *Muses*. This carries a strong implication that the name *Moses* is drawn from the same source, and that he is not a *real but* an allegorical person, as Maimonides describes what *is called* the *Mosaic* account of the Creation to be.

I will go a point still further. The Jews now know the

book of Genesis, and the names of all the persons mentioned in the first *ten chapters* of that book, from Adam to Noah: yet we do not hear (I speak for myself) of any Jew, of the present day, of the name of Adam, Abel, Seth, Enoch, Methuselah, Noah,* Shem, Ham, or Japhet (names mentioned in the first ten chapters), though these were, according to the account in that book, the most extraordinary of all the names that make up the catalogue of the Jewish chronology.

The names the Jews now adopt, are those that are mentioned in Genesis after the tenth chapter, as Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, &c. How then does it happen, that they do not adopt the names found in the first ten chapters? Here is evidently a line of division drawn between the first ten chapters of Genesis, and the remaining chapters, with respect to the adoption of names. There must be some cause for this, and I go to offer a solution of the problem.

The reader will recollect the quotation I have already made from the Jewish Rabbin Maimonides, wherein he says, "We ought not to understand nor to take according to the letter that which is written in the book of the Creation. It is a maxim (says he) which all our sages repeat *above all*, with respect to the work of six days."

The qualifying expression *above all*, implies there are other parts of the book, though not so important, that ought not to be understood or taken according to the letter, and as the Jews do not adopt the names mentioned in the first ten chapters, it appears evident those chapters are included in the injunction not to take them in a literal sense, or according to the letter; from which it follows, that the persons or characters mentioned in the first ten chapters, as Adam, Abel, Seth, Enoch, Methuselah, and so on to Noah, are not real but fictitious or allegorical persons, and therefore the Jews do not adopt their names into their families. If they affixed the same idea of reality to them as they do to those that follow after the tenth chapter, the names of Adam, Abel, Seth, &c., would be as common among the Jews of the present day, as are those of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, and Aaron.

In the superstition they have been in, scarcely a Jew family

* *Noah is an exception*; there are of that name among the Jews. —*Editor.*

would have been without an *Enoch*, as a presage of his going to heaven as ambassador for the whole family. Every mother who wished that the *days* of her son *might be long in the land* would call him *Methuselah*; and all the Jews that might have to traverse the ocean would be named Noah, as a charm against shipwreck and drowning.

This is domestic evidence against the book of Genesis, which, joined to the several kinds of evidence before recited, show the book of Genesis not to be older than the Babylonian captivity, and to be fictitious. I proceed to fix the character and antiquity of the book of

JOB.

The book of Job has not the least appearance of being a book of the Jews, and though printed among the books of the Bible, does not belong to it. There is no reference in it to any Jewish law or ceremony. On the contrary, all the internal evidence it contains shows it to be a book of the Gentiles, either of Persia or Chaldea.

The name of Job does not appear to be a Jewish name. There is no Jew of that name in any of the books of the Bible, neither is there now that I ever heard of. The country where Job is said or supposed to have lived, or rather where the scene of the drama is laid, is called Uz, and there was no place of that name ever belonging to the Jews. If Uz is the same as Ur, it was in Chaldea, the country of the Gentiles.

The Jews can give no account how they came by this book, nor who was the author, nor the time when it was written. Origen, in his work against Celsus (in the first ages of the Christian Church), says, *that the book of Job is older than Moses.* Eben-Ezra, the Jewish commentator, whom (as I have before said) the Bishop allows to have been a man of great erudition, and who certainly understood his own language, says that the book of Job has been translated from another language into Hebrew. Spinosa, another Jewish commentator of great learning, confirms the opinion of Eben-Ezra, and says moreover, "*Je crois que Job etait Gentie;*"* I believe that Job was a Gentile.

* *Spinosa on* the Ceremonies of the Jews, page 296, published in *French* at Amsterdam, 1678.

The Bishop (in his answer to me) says, "that the structure of the whole book of Job, in whatever light of history or drama it be considered, is founded on the belief that prevailed with the Persians and Chaldeans, and other Gentile nations, of a good and an evil spirit."

In speaking of the good and evil spirit of the Persians, the Bishop writes them *Arimanius* and *Oromasdes*. I will not dispute about the orthography, because I know that translated names are differently spelled in different languages. But he has nevertheless made a capital error. He has put the Devil first; for Arimanius, or, as it is more generally written, *Ahriman*, is the *evil spirit*, and *Oromasdes* or *Ormusd* the good spirit. He has made the same mistake, in the same paragraph, in speaking of the good and evil spirit of the ancient Egyptians *Osiris* and *Typho*, he puts Typho before Osiris. The error is just the same as if the Bishop, in writing about the Christian religion, or in preaching a sermon, were to say the *Devil* and *God*. A priest ought to know his own trade better. We agree, however, about the structure of the book of Job, that it is Gentile. I have said in the second part of the Age of Reason, and given my reasons for it, that *the drama of it is not Hebrew*.

From the testimonies I have cited, that of Origen, who, about fourteen hundred years ago, said that the book of Job was more ancient than Moses, that of Eben-Ezra, who in his commentary on Job, says, it has been translated from another language (and consequently from a Gentile language) into Hebrew; that of Spinosa, who not only says the same thing, but that the author of it was a Gentile; and that of the Bishop, who says that the structure of the whole book is Gentile. It follows then, in the first place, that the book of Job is not a book of the Jews originally.

Then, in order to determine to what people or nation any book of religion belongs, we must compare it with the leading dogmas and precepts of that people or nation; and therefore, upon the Bishop's own construction, the book of Job belongs either to the ancient Persians, the Chaldeans, or the Egyptians; because the structure of it is consistent with the dogma they held, that of a good and evil spirit, called in Job, *God* and *Satan*, existing as distinct and separate beings, and it is not consistent with any dogma of the Jews.

The belief of a good and an evil spirit, existing as distinct and

separate beings, is not a dogma to be found in any of the books of the Bible. It is not till we come to the New Testament that we hear of any such dogma. There the person called the Son of God, holds conversation with Satan on a mountain, as familiarly as is represented in the drama of Job. Consequently the Bishop cannot say, in this respect, that the New Testament is founded upon the Old. According to the Old, the God of the Jews was the God of everything. All good and all evil came from him. According to Exodus it was God, and not the Devil, that hardened Pharaoh's heart. According to the book of Samuel it was an evil spirit from God that troubled Saul. And Ezekiel makes God to say, in speaking of the Jews, "*I gave them the statutes that were not good, and judgments by which they should not live.*" The Bible describes the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in such a contradictory manner, and under such a two-fold character, there would be no knowing when he was in earnest and when in irony; when to believe, and when not. As to the precepts, principles, and maxims, in the book of Job, they show that the people, abusively called the heathen in the books of the the Jews, had the most sublime ideas of the Creator, and the most exalted devotional morality. It was the Jews who dishonoured God. It was the Gentiles who glorified him. As to the fabulous personifications introduced by the Greek and Latin poets, it was a corruption of the ancient religion of the Gentiles, which consisted in the adoration of a first cause of the works of the creation, in which the sun was the great visible agent.

It appears to have been a religion of gratitude and adoration, and not of prayer and discontented solicitation. In Job we find adoration and submission, but not prayer. Even the ten commandments enjoin not prayer. Prayer has been added to devotion, by the church of Rome, as the instrument of fees and perquisites. All prayers by the priests of the Christian church, whether public or private, must be paid for. It may be right, individually, to pray for virtues, or mental instruction, but not for things. It is an attempt to dictate to the Almighty in the government of the world. But to return to the book of Job.

As the book of Job decides itself to be a book of the Gen-

tiles, the next thing is to find out to what particular nation it belongs, and lastly, what is its antiquity.

As a composition, it is sublime, beautiful, and scientific: full of sentiment, and abounding in grand metaphorical description. As a drama, it is regular. The dramatis personæ, the persons performing the several parts, are regularly introduced, and speak without interruption or confusion. The scene, as I have before said, is laid in the country of the Gentiles, and the unities, though not always necessary in a drama, are observed here as strictly as the subject would admit.

In the last act, where the Almighty is introduced as speaking from the whirlwind, to decide the controversy between Job and his friends, it is an idea as grand as poetical imagination can conceive. What follows of Job's future prosperity does not belong to it as a drama. It is an epilogue of the writer, as the first verses of the first chapter, which gave an account of Job, his country and his riches, are the prologue.

The book carries the appearance of being the work of some of the Persian Magi, not only because the structure of it corresponds to the dogmas of the religion of those people, as founded by Zoroaster, but from the astronomical references in it to the constellations of the Zodiac and other objects in the heavens, of which the sun, in their religion called Mithra, was the chief. Job, in describing the power of God (Job ix. v. 27,) says, "Who commandeth the sun, and it riseth not, and sealeth up the stars—who alone spreadeth out the heavens, and treadeth upon the waves of the sea—who maketh Arcturus, Orion, and Pleiades, and the chambers of the south." All this astronomical allusion is consistent with the religion of the Persians.

Establishing then the book of Job, as the work of some of the Persian or Eastern Magi, the case naturally follows, that when the Jews returned from captivity, by the permission of Cyrus, king of Persia, they brought this book with them: had it translated into Hebrew, and put into their scriptural canons, which were not formed till after their return. This will account for the name of Job being mentioned in Ezekiel (*Ezekiel, chap.* xiv. *v.* 14,) who was one of the captives, and also for its not being mentioned in any book said or supposed to have been *written* before the captivity.

Among the astronomical allusions in the book, there is one which serves to fix its antiquity. It is that where God is made to say to Job, in the style of reprimand, "*Canst thou bind the sweet influences of Pleiades.*" (Chap. xxxviii., ver. 31.) As the explanation of this depends upon astronomical calculation, I will, for the sake of those who would not otherwise understand it, endeavour to explain it as clearly as the subject will admit.

The Pleiades are a cluster of pale, milky stars, about the size of a man's hand, in the constellation of Taurus, or in English, the Bull. It is one of the constellations of the Zodiac, of which there are twelve, answering to the twelve months of the year. The Pleiades are visible in the winter nights, but not in the summer nights, being then below the horizon.

The Zodiac is an imaginary belt or circle in the heavens, eighteen degrees broad, in which the sun apparently makes his annual course, and in which all the planets move. When the sun appears to our view to be between us and the group of stars forming such or such a constellation, he is said to be in that constellation. Consequently the constellations he appears to be in, in the summer, are directly opposite to those he appeared in, in the winter, and the same with respect to spring and autumn.

The Zodiac, besides being divided into twelve constellations, is also, like every other circle, great or small, divided into 360 equal parts, called degrees; consequently each constellation contains 30 degrees. The constellations of the Zodiac are generally called signs, to distinguish them from the constellations that are placed out of the Zodiac, and this is the name I shall now use.

The precession of the equinoxes is the part most difficult to explain, and it is on this that the explanation chiefly depends.

The equinoxes correspond to the two seasons of the year, when the sun makes equal day and night.

The following is a disconnected part of the same work, and was first published in 1824.

SABBATH OR SUNDAY.

THE seventh day, or more properly speaking, the period of seven days, was originally a numerical division of time, and nothing more; and had the bishop been acquainted with the history of astronomy he would have known this. The annual revolution of the earth makes what we call a year.

The year is artificially divided into months, the months into weeks of seven days, the days into hours, &c. The period of seven days, like any other of the artificial divisions of the year, is only a fractional part thereof, contrived for the convenience of counters.

It is ignorance, imposition, and priestcraft, that have called it otherwise. They might as well talk of the Lord's month, of the Lord's week, of the Lord's hour, as of the Lord's day. All time is his, and no part of it is more holy or more sacred than another. It is however necessary to the trade of a priest that he should preach up a distinction of days.

Before the science of astronomy was studied and carried to the degree of eminence to which it was by the Egyptians and Chaldeans, the people of those times had no other helps, than what common observation of the very visible changes of the sun and moon afforded, to enable them to keep an account of the progress of time. As far as history establishes the point, the Egyptians were the first people who divided the year into twelve months. Herodotus, who lived above two thousand two hundred years ago, and is the most ancient historian whose works have reached our time, says, *they did this by the knowledge they had of the stars.* As to the Jews, there is not one single improvement in any science or in any scientific art, that they ever produced. They were the most ignorant of all the illiterate world. If the word of the Lord had come to them, as they pretend, and as the bishop professes to believe, and that they were to be the harbingers of it to the rest of the world; the Lord would have taught them the use of letters, and the art of printing; for without the means of communicating the word it *could not* be communicated; whereas letters were

the invention of the Gentile world; and printing of the modern world. But to return to my subject—

Before the helps which the science of astronomy afforded, the people, as before said, had no other, whereby to keep an account of the progress of time, than what the common and very visible changes of the sun and moon afforded. They saw that a great number of days made a year, but the account of them was too tedious, and too difficult to be kept numerically, from one to three hundred and sixty-five; neither did they know the true time of a solar year. It therefore became necessary, for the purpose of marking the progress of days, to put them into small parcels, such as are now called weeks; and which consisted as they now do of seven days. By this means the memory was assisted as it is with us at this day; for we do not say of anything that is past, that it was fifty, sixty, or seventy days ago, but that it was so many weeks, or or if longer time, so many months. It is impossible to keep an account of time without helps of this kind.

Julian Scaliger, the inventor of the Julian period of 7,980 years, produced by multiplying the cycle of the moon, the cycle of the sun, and the years of an indiction, 19, 28, 15, into each other; says, that the custom of reckoning by periods of seven days was used by the Assyrians, the Egyptians, the Hebrews, the people of India, the Arabs, and by all the nations of the East.

In addition to what Scaliger says, it is evident that in Britain, in Germany, and the north of Europe, they reckoned by periods of seven days, long before the book called the Bible was known in those parts; and consequently that they did not take that mode of reckoning from anything written in that book.

That they reckoned by periods of seven days, is evident from their having seven names, and no more, for the several days; and which have not the most distant relation to anything in the book of Genesis, or to that which is called the fourth commandment.

Those names are still retained in England, with no other alteration than what has been produced by moulding the Saxon and Danish languages into modern English.

1. Sun-day from *Sunne*, the sun, and *dag*, day, Saxon, *Sondag, Danish.* The day dedicated to the sun.

2. Monday, that is, moonday, from *Mona*, the moon, Saxon, *Moano*, Danish. Day dedicated to the moon.

3. Tuesday, that is, *Tuisco's-day*. The day dedicated to the idol *Tuisco*.

4. Wednesday, that is, Woden's-day. The day dedicated to *Woden*, the Mars of the Germans.

5. Thursday, that is, Thors-day, dedicated to the idol *Thor*.

6. Friday, that is, *Friga's-day*. The day dedicated to *Friga*, the Venus of the Saxons.

Saturday, from *Seaten* (*Saturn*), an idol of the Saxons; one of the emblems representing time, which continually terminates and renews itself: the last day of the period of seven days. When we see a certain mode of reckoning general among nations totally unconnected, differing from each other in religion and in government, and some of them unknown to each other, we may be certain that it arises from some natural and common cause, prevailing alike over all, and which strikes every one in the same manner. Thus all nations have reckoned arithmetically by tens, because the people of all nations have ten fingers. If they had more or less than ten, the mode of arithmetical reckoning would have followed that number, for the fingers are a natural numeration-table to all the world. I now come to show why the period of seven days is so generally adopted.

Though the sun is the great luminary of the world, and the animating cause of all the fruits of the earth, the moon, by renewing herself more than twelve times oftener than the sun, which it does but once a year, served the rustic world as a natural almanac, as the fingers served it for a numeration-table. All the world could see the moon, her changes, and her monthly revolutions; and their mode of reckoning time was accommodated as nearly as could possibly be done in round numbers, to agree with the changes of that planet, their natural almanac.

The Moon performs her natural revolution round the earth in twenty-nine days and a half. She goes from a new moon to a half moon, to a full moon, to a half moon gibbous or convex, and then to a new moon again. Each of these changes is performed in seven days and nine hours; but seven days is the nearest *division in* round numbers that could be taken

and this was sufficient to suggest the universal custom of reckoning by periods of seven days, since it is impossible to reckon time without some stated period.

How the odd hours could be disposed of without interfering with the regular periods of seven days, in case the ancients recommenced a new Septenary period with every new moon, required no more difficulty than it did to regulate the Egyptian calendar afterwards, of twelve months of thirty days each, or the odd hour in the Julian calendar, or the odd days and hours in the French calendar. In all cases it is done by the addition of complementary days; and it can be done in no otherwise.

The Bishop knows that as the solar year does not end at the termination of what we call a day, but runs some hours into the next day, as the quarters of the moon runs some hours beyond seven days; that it is impossible to give the year any fixed number of days, that will not in course of years become wrong, and make a complementary time necessary to keep the nominal year parallel with the solar year. The same must have been the case with those who regulated time formerly by lunar revolutions. They would have to add three days to every second moon, or in that proportion, in order to make the new moon and the new week commence together, like the nominal year and the solar year.

Diodorus of Sicily, who, as before said, lived before Christ was born, in giving an account of times much anterior to his own, speaks of years, of three months, of four months, of six months. These could be of no other than years composed of lunar revolutions, and therefore to bring the several periods of seven days to agree with such years, there must have been complementary days.

The moon was the first almanac the world knew; and the only one which the face of the heavens afforded to common spectators. Her changes and her revolutions have entered into all the calendars that have been known in the known world.

The division of the year into twelve months, which, as before shown, was first done by the Egyptians, though arranged with astronomical knowledge, had reference to the twelve *moons, or,* more properly speaking, to the twelve lunar revo*lutions that* appear in the space of a solar year, as the period

of seven days had reference to one revolution of the moon. The feasts of the Jews were, and those of the Christian Church still are, regulated by the moon. The Jews observed the feasts of the new moon and full moon, and therefore the period of seven days was necessary to them.

All the feasts of the Christian Church are regulated by the moon. That called Easter governs all the rest, and the moon governs Easter. It is always the first Sunday after the first full moon that happens after the vernal Equinox, or 21st of March.

In proportion as the science of astronomy was studied and improved by the Egyptians and Chaldeans, and the solar year regulated by astronomical observations, the custom of reckoning by lunar revolutions became of less use, and in time discontinued. But such is the harmony of all parts of the machinery of the universe, that a calculation made from the motion of one part will correspond with some other.

The period of seven days deduced from the revolution of the moon round the earth, corresponded nearer than any other period of days would do to the revolution of the earth round the sun. Fifty-two periods of seven days make 364, which is within one day and some odd hours of a solar year; and there is no other periodical number that will do the same, till we come to the number thirteen, which is too great for common use, and the numbers before seven are too small. The custom, therefore, of reckoning by periods of seven days, as best suited to the revolution of the moon, applied with equal convenience to the solar year, and became united with it. But the decimal division of time, as regulated by the French calendar, is superior to every other method.

There is no part of the bible, that is supposed to have been written by persons who lived before the time of Josiah, (which was a thousand years after the time of Moses,) that mentions anything about the Sabbath, as a day consecrated by that which is called the fourth commandment, or that the Jews kept any such day. Had any such day been kept, during the thousand years of which I am speaking, it certainly would have been mentioned frequently; and that it should never be mentioned, is strong, presumptive, and circumstantial evidence that no such day was kept. But mention is often made of the feasts *of the new-moon,* and of the full-moon; for the Jews, as

before shown, worshipped the moon; and the word *sabbath* was applied by the Jews to the feasts of that planet, and to those of their other deities. It is said in Hosea, chap. 2, ver. 11, in speaking of the Jewish nation, "And I will cause all her mirth to cease, her feast-days, her *new-moons* and her *sabbaths*, and all her solemn feasts." Nobody will be so foolish as to contend that the *sabbaths* here spoken of are Mosaic sabbaths. The construction of the verse implies they are lunar sabbaths, or sabbaths of the moon. It ought also to be observed that Hosea lived in the time of Ahaz and Hezekiah, about seventy years before the time of Josiah, when the law called the law of Moses is said to have been found; and consequently, the sabbaths that Hosea speaks of are sabbaths of the Idolatry.

When those priestly reformers, (impostors I should call them) Hilkiah, Ezra, and Nehemiah, began to produce books under the name of the books of Moses, they found the word *sabbath* in use; and as to the period of seven days, it is, like numbering arithmetically by tens, from time immemorial. But having found them in use, they continued to make them serve to the support of their new imposition. They trumped up a story of the creation being made in six days, and of the Creator resting on the seventh, to suit with the lunar and chronological period of seven days; and they manufactured a commandment to agree with both. Impostors always work in this manner. They put fables for originals, and causes for effects.

There is scarcely any part of science, or anything in nature, which those impostors and blasphemers of science called priests, as well Christians as Jews, have not, at some time or other, perverted, or sought to pervert to the purpose of superstition and falsehood. Everything wonderful in appearance, has been ascribed to angels, to devils, or to saints. Everything ancient has some legendary tale annexed to it. The common operations of nature have not escaped their practice of corrupting everything.

FUTURE STATE.

THE idea of a future state was an universal idea to all nations except the Jews. At the time and long before Jesus Christ and the men called his disciples were born, it had been sublimely treated of by Cicero in his book on old age, by Plato, Socrates, Xenophon, and other of the ancient theologists, whom the abusive Christian church calls Heathen. Xenophon represents the elder Cyrus speaking after this manner:—

"Think not, my dearest children, that when I depart from you, I shall be no more; but remember that my soul, even while I lived among you, was invisible to you; yet by my actions you were sensible it existed in this body. Believe it therefore existing still, though it be still unseen. How quickly would the honours of illustrious men perish after death, if their souls performed nothing to preserve their fame? For my own part, I could never think that the soul, while in a mortal body, lives; but when departed from it, dies; or that its consciousness is lost, when it is discharged out of an unconscious habitation. But when it is freed from all corporeal alliance, it is then that it truly exists."

Since then the idea of a future existence was universal, it may be asked, what new doctrine does the New Testament contain? I answer, that of corrupting the theory of the ancient theologists, by annexing to it the heavy and gloomy doctrine of the resurrection of the body.

As to the resurrection of the body, whether the same body or another, it is a miserable conceit, fit only to be preached to man as an animal. It is not worthy to be called doctrine.—Such an idea never entered the brain of any visionary but those of the Christian church:—yet it is in this that the novelty of the New Testament consists. All the other matters serve but as props to this, and those props are most wretchedly put together.

MIRACLES.

THE Christian church is full of miracles. In one of the churches of Brabant, they show a number of cannon balls, which they say, the Virgin Mary, in some former war, caught in her muslin *apron* as they came roaring out of the cannon's mouth, and prevented their hurting the *Saints* of her favourite army. She does no such feats now-a-days. Perhaps the reason is, that the infidels have taken away her muslin apron. They show also, between Montmartre and the village of St. Dennis, several places where they say St. Dennis stopt with his head in his hands after it had been cut off at Montmartre. The Protestants will call those things lies; and where is the proof that all the other things called miracles are not as great lies as those?

[*There appears to be an omission here in the copy.*]

Christ, say those Cabalists, came in the *fulness of time.* And pray what is the fulness of time? The words admit of no idea. They are perfectly Cabalistical. Time is a word invented to describe to our conception a greater or less portion of eternity. It may be a minute, a portion of eternity measured by the vibration of a pendulum of a certain length:—it may be a day, a year, a hundred, or a thousand years, or any other quantity. Those portions are only greater or less comparatively.

The word fulness applies not to any of them. The idea of fulness of time cannot be conceived. A woman with child and ready for delivery, as Mary was when Christ was born, may be said to have gone her full time; but it is the woman that is full, not time.

It may also be said figuratively, in certain cases, that the times are full of events; but time itself is incapable of being full of itself. Ye hypocrites! learn to speak intelligible language.

It happened to be a time of peace when they say Christ was born; and what then? There had been many such intervals; *and have* been many such since. Time was no fuller in any *of them than* in the other. If he were he would be fuller *now than* he ever was before. If he was full then he must be

bursting now. But peace or war have relation to circumstances, and not to time; and those Cabalists would be at as much loss to make out any meaning to fulness of circumstances, as to fulness of time; and if they could, it would be fatal; for fulness of circumstances would mean, when there is no more time to follow.

Christ, therefore, like every other person, was neither in the fulness of one nor the other.

But though we cannot conceive the idea of fulness of time, because we cannot have conception of a time when there shall be no time; nor of fulness of circumstance, because we cannot conceive a state of existence to be without circumstances; we can often see, after a thing is past, if any circumstance, necessary to give the utmost activity and success to that thing, was wanting at the time that thing took place. If such a circumstance was wanting, we may be certain that the thing which took place, was not a thing of God's ordaining; whose work is always perfect means. They tell us that Christ was the Son of God; in that case, he would have known everything; and he came upon earth to make known the will of God to man throughout the whole earth. If this had been true, Christ would have known and would have been furnished with all the possible means of doing it; and would have instructed mankind, or at least his apostles, in the use of such of the means as they could use themselves to facilitate the accomplishment of the mission; consequently he would have instructed them in the art of printing, for the press is the tongue of the world; and without which his or their preaching was less than a whistle compared to thunder. Since then he did not do this, he had not the means necessary to the mission; and consequently had not the mission.

They tell us in the book of Acts, chap. ii., a very stupid story of the Apostles' having the gift of tongues; and *cloven tongues of fire* descended and sat upon each of them. Perhaps it was this story of cloven tongues that gave rise to the notion of slitting Jack-daws' tongues to make them talk. Be that however as it may, the gift of tongues, even if it were true, would be but of little use without the art of printing. I can sit in my chamber as I do while writing this, and by the aid of printing, can send the thoughts I am writing through the *greatest part of Europe*, to the East Indies, and over all

North America in a few months. They had not the means, and the want of means detects the pretended mission.

There are three modes of communication. Speaking, writing, and printing. The first is exceedingly limited. A man's voice can be heard but a few yards of distance; and his person can be but in one place.

Writing is much more extensive; but the thing written cannot be multiplied but at great expense, and the multiplication will be slow and incorrect. Were there no other means of circulating what priests call the word of God (the Old and New Testament) than by writing copies, those copies could not be purchased at less than forty pounds sterling each; consequently but few people could purchase them, while the writers could scarcely obtain a livelihood by it. But the art of printing changes all the cases, and opens a scene as vast as the world. It gives to man a sort of divine attribute. It gives to him mental omnipresence. He can be everywhere and at the same instant; for wherever he is read he is mentally there.

The case applies not only against the pretended mission of Christ and his Apostles, but against everything that priests call the word of God, and against all those who pretend to deliver it; for had God ever delivered any verbal word, he would have taught the means of communicating it. The one without the other is inconsistent with the wisdom we conceive of the Creator.

The third chapter of Genesis, verse 21, tells us that *God made coats of skins and clothed* Adam and Eve. It was infinitely more important that man should be taught the art of printing, than that Adam should be taught to make a pair of leather breeches, or his wife a petticoat.

There is another matter, equally striking and important, that connects itself with those observations against this pretended word of God, this manufactured book, called *Revealed Religion.*

We know that whatever is of God's doing is unalterable by man beyond the laws which the Creator has ordained. We cannot make a tree grow with the root in the air and the fruit *in the ground*; we cannot make Iron into Gold, nor Gold into *Iron;* we cannot make rays of light shine forth rays of darkness, nor darkness shine forth light. If there were such a

thing, as a word of God, it would possess the same properties which all his other works do. It would resist destructive alteration. But we see that the book which they call the word of God, has not this property. That book says, Genesis, chap. i. v. 27, "*So God created man in his own image;*" but the printer can make it say, *So man created God in his own image.* The words are passive to every transposition of them, or can be annihilated and others put in their places. This is not the case with anything that is of God's doing; and therefore this book called the word of God, tried by the same universal rule which every other of God's works within our reach can be tried by, proves itself to be a forgery.

The Bishop says, that "*miracles are proper proofs of a divine mission.*" Admitted. But we know that men, and especially priests, can tell lies, and call them miracles. It is therefore necessary, that the thing called a miracle be proved to be true, and also to be miraculous; before it can be admitted as proof of the thing called revelation.

The Bishop must be a bad logician not to know that one doubtful thing cannot be admitted as proof that another doubtful thing is true. It would be like attempting to prove a liar not to be a liar, by the evidence of another who is as great a liar as himself.

Though Jesus Christ, by being ignorant of the art of printing, shows he had not the means necessary to a divine mission, and consequently had no such mission; it does not follow that if he had known that art, the divinity of what they call his mission would be proved thereby, any more than it proved the divinity of the man who invented printing. Something, therefore, beyond printing, even if he had known it, was necessary *as a miracle*, to have proved that what he delivered was the word of God; and this was that the book in which that word should be contained, which is now called the Old and New Testament, should possess the miraculous property, distinct from all human books, of resisting alteration. This would be not only a miracle, but an ever-existing and universal miracle; whereas those which they tell us of, even if they had been true, were momentary and local; they would leave no trace behind, after the lapse of a few years, of having ever existed: But this would prove, in all ages and in all places, the *book to be divine* and not human, as effectually, and as

conveniently, as aquafortis proves gold to be gold by not being capable of acting upon it; and detects all other metals and all counterfeit composition, by dissolving them. Since then the only miracle capable of every proof is wanting, and which everything that is of divine origin possesses; all the tales of miracles with which the Old and New Testament are filled, are fit only for impostors to preach and fools to believe.

ORIGIN OF FREE-MASONRY.

PREFACE BY THE EDITOR.

THIS tract is a chapter belonging to the third part of the Age of Reason, as will be seen by the references made in it to preceding articles, as forming a part of the same work. It was culled from the writings of Mr. Paine, after his death, and published in a mutilated state, by Mrs. Bonneville, his executrix. Passages having a reference to the Christian religion she erased, with a view, no doubt, of accommodating the work to the prejudices of bigotry. These however have been restored from the original manuscript, excepting a few lines which were rendered illegible.

The masonic society had committed nothing to print until the year 1722, when Doct. Anderson's book of constitutions, &c., was ordered by the Grand Lodge to be printed. Since that time the masons have published many works respecting the fraternity, all of which, through design or want of information, tend to obscure and embarrass the subject; and as the society had adopted the custom of the Anglo-Saxon priests, called Druids, to keep their proceedings an entire secret, mankind in general, including the greater portion of the brethren themselves, have remained in utter ignorance in regard to its establishment and original intention. Various speculations therefore continue to be made respecting the origin of the society, and its views at the time of its formation; and Mr. Paine, among the rest, with all his sagacity, has suffered himself to be most egregiously deceived by such writings of the masons as had fallen into his hands. These writers, in giving an account of the society, take up the history of architecture as far back as any record of it has survived the wreck of time. Wherever they can trace in history, whether true or fabulous, any account of noble and grand structures, they presumptuously pronounce them to have been raised by their society. The *pyramids* of Egypt, the tower of Babel, whose ex-

istence is doubted, and Solomon's temple, about which there has probably been much lying, are all claimed by them. For what is this ridiculous parade, but to make the uninitiated, as well as their own members, few of whom know anything about it, wonder at the astonishing antiquity of the institution? Would not the advice of Pope apply in this case?

> "Go! and pretend your family is young,
> Nor own your fathers have been fools so long."

If the antiquity of a sect or society proved its utility, or that it was founded in correct principles, the religion taught by the ancient Egyptian priests, or Judaism, ought to be preferred to Christianity.

There is no possible use to be derived from deception upon this subject. The masonic society is undoubtedly very ancient; having commenced, in the city of York, in England, in the early part of the tenth century of the Christian era; and from thence it spread into other parts of Europe. It was formed by men who had some knowledge of rude architecture, such as it was at that day, and working masons; and had no other view than improvement in the art or craft of masonry; which their writers dignify with the title of *royal craft*, because some of their Kings have *condescended* to become members of the society, for the purpose, no doubt, of flattering their subjects to persevere in improvements in the art of building; which was useful to them, as they always stand in need of palaces, castles, and churches. The society is composed of free men, none others are admitted, hence the term, free masons. At first there were but three degrees, apprentice, fellow-craft, that is, one who had served an apprenticeship, and was entitled to wages as a journeyman; and master-mason. The latter degree entitled its possessor to contract for building on his own account. It was not until the beginning of the eighteenth century, that any one, according to the regulations of the society, could be admitted a member, who did not labour at the trade of masonry, or knew something of architecture; although, perhaps, through favour, some were smuggled in who had very little or no knowledge of *that art.**

* The author of this Preface, although he has thrown considerable light upon the subject, has been himself deceived by masonic writers.

As to the mysteries of the craft, so much talked of, they are of the same nature as those of carpentry, or any other trade; and consist in a knowledge of the art of masonry; which was thought much more of at the time the society was instituted, than at the present day. The trifling rites and ceremonies, which the masons borrowed from the ancient Druids, are mere allegories, and symbolical signs and words, serving as a medium of secrecy, by means of which the members of the society are enabled to recognise each other.

There is no more propriety in prefixing the term free to masonry, than there is to carpentry, smithery, or to any other trade. It is inapplicable to any art or trade; although it may be applied to the professors of it. At the time the freemasons' society was first instituted in England, there were in that kingdom both free men and slaves in all the mechanical trades then in use. Dr. Henry, in his history of Great Britain, giving an account of the different ranks of people, &c., from 449 to 1066, after stating that slavery had been in some degree meliorated, observes, "But after all these mitigations of the severities of slavery, the yoke of servitude was still very heavy, and the greater part of the labourers, mechanics, and common people, groaned under that yoke at the conclusion of this period." Which was 140 years after the establishment of the masonic society.

in respect to the origin of the existing society of Freemasons; which is entirely speculative, and was instituted at the time when, he says, persons not being masons by trade were first admitted as members, viz. in the early part of the eighteenth century. Late writers have shown, that the first Lodge ever established upon the existing speculative plan, was formed in London, in 1717; and that a similar society was formed in Scotland, in 1736. These two lodges soon began to quarrel about precedency; each endeavouring to prove its priority by existing records of the humble mechanical societies of labouring masons, which had been established in both kingdoms many centuries before. The Yorkites, in England, it is believed, produced the oldest documents: both societies, however, continued to grant dispensations for forming lodges in foreign countries.

From these two sources all the Freemason societies, upon the present establishment, owe their origin. Nothing of the kind ever existed in Europe, or any other quarter of the world, previously to 1717. Although ostensibly founded upon a society of real working masons, nothing is *now taught* in it, nor ever has been, of that art, or any *other art or science.*—Ed.

All the writers upon this subject, who are members of the society, endeavour to conceal the origin and object of it. For what reason it is difficult to imagine, except it be to keep the world in amazement respecting it. Or, perhaps, their pride induces them to contemn the humble, though laudable and useful purposes for which the institution was formed. Enough however has appeared in the old records which they have published to establish the view I have taken of it, and which, when I commenced this preface, I intended to have inserted; but finding they would extend to too great a length, I am under the necessity of omitting them. I will however make a few extracts from the old charges of the Free and Accepted Masons, collected from their old records, at the command of the Grand Master, by James Anderson, D. D. Approved by the Grand Lodge, and ordered to be printed in the first edition of the book of constitutions, on March 25, 1722.

"*Concerning God and religion.* A mason is obliged, by his tenure, to obey the moral law; and if he rightly understands the art, he will never be a stupid atheist, nor an irreligious libertine. But though in ancient times masons were charged in every country to be of the religion of that country or nation, whatever it was, yet it is now thought more expedient only to oblige them to that religion in which all men agree, leaving their particular opinions to themselves; that is, to be good men and true, or men of honour and honesty, by whatever denominations or persuasions they may be distinguished; whereby masonry becomes the centre of union, and the means of conciliating true friendship among persons, that must have remained at a perpetual distance.*

Of Lodges. A lodge is a place where masons assemble and work; hence that assembly, or duly organized society of ma-

* William Preston, past master of the lodge of antiquity, in his Illustrations of Masonry, makes the following remarks on the same subject. "The spirit of the fulminating priest will be tamed; and a moral brother, though of a different persuasion, engage his esteem: for mutual toleration in religious opinions is one of the most distinguishing and valuable characteristics of the craft. As all religions teach morality, if a brother be found to act the part of a truly honest *man, his* private speculative opinions are left to God and himself. *Thus through* the influence of masonry, which is reconcilable to the *best policy,* all those disputes which embitter life, and sour the tem*pers of men,* are avoided."

sons, is called a lodge; and every brother ought to belong to one, and to be subject to its *By-laws*, and the general regulations.

The persons admitted members of a lodge, must be good and true men, free-born, and of mature and discreet age, no bondmen, no women, no immoral or scandalous men, but of good report.

Of apprentices. Candidates may know that no master should take an apprentice, unless he has sufficient employment for him, and unless he be a perfect youth, having no maim or defect in his body, that may render him incapable of learning the art, of serving his master's lord, and of being made a brother, and then a fellow-craft in due time, even after he has served such a term of years, as the custom of the country directs; and that he should be descended of honest parents.

Of the management of the craft in working. All Masons shall work honestly on working days, that they may live creditably on holy days; and the time appointed by the law of the land, or confirmed by custom, shall be observed.

The most expert of the fellow-craftsmen shall be chosen or appointed the master or overseer of the Lord's work; who is to be called master by those that work under him. The craftsmen are to avoid all ill-language, and to call each other by no disobliging name, but brother or fellow; and to behave themselves courteously within and without the lodge.

The master, knowing himself to be able of cunning, shall undertake the Lord's work as reasonably as possible, and truly dispend his goods as if they were his own; nor give more wages to any brother or apprentice than he really may deserve.

Both the master and the masons receiving their wages justly, shall be faithful to the Lord, and honestly finish their work, whether task or journey; nor put the work to task that hath been accustomed to journey.

None shall discover envy at the prosperity of a brother, nor supplant him, or put him out of his work, if he be capable to finish the same; for no man can finish another's work so much to the Lord's profit, unless he be thoroughly acquainted with the designs and draughts of him that began it.

When a fellow-craftsman is chosen warden of the work under the master, he shall be true both to master and fellows,

shall carefully oversee the work in the master's absence, to the Lord's profit; and his brethren shall obey him.

All masons employed shall meekly receive their wages without murmuring or mutiny, and not desert the master till the work is finished.

A younger brother shall be instructed in working, to prevent spoiling the materials for want of judgment, and for increasing and continuing of *brotherly love.*

All the tools used in working shall be approved by the Grand Lodge.

No labourer shall be employed in the proper work of masonry; nor shall Freemasons work with those that are *not free,* without an urgent necessity; nor shall they teach labourers and unaccepted masons as they should teach a brother or fellow.

Of behaviour in the Lodge while constituted. If any complaint be brought, the brother found guilty shall stand to the award and determination of the lodge, who are the proper and competent judges of all such controversies (unless you carry it by appeal to the Grand Lodge), and to whom they ought to be referred, unless a lord's work be hindered the mean while, in which case a particular reference may be made; but you must never go to law about what concerneth masonry without an absolute necessity apparent to the lodge.

Behaviour in presence of strangers not masons. You shall be cautious in your words and carriage, that the most penetrating stranger shall not be able to discover or find out what is not proper to be intimated; and sometimes you shall divert a discourse, and manage it prudently for the honour of the worshipful fraternity.

Behaviour at home, and in your neighbourhood. You are to act as becomes a moral and wise man; particularly not to let your family, friends, and neighbours know the concerns of the lodge, &c., but wisely to consult your own honour, and that of the ancient brotherhood. You must also consult your health, by not continuing together too late, or too long from home, after lodge hours are past; and by avoiding of gluttony and drunkenness, that your families be not neglected or injured, nor you disabled from working.

Behaviour towards a strange brother. You are cautiously *to examine* him, in such a method as prudence shall direct

you, that you may not be imposed upon by an ignorant false pretender, whom you are to reject with contempt and derision, and beware of giving him any hints of knowledge.

But if you discover him to be a true and genuine brother, you are to respect him accordingly; and if he is in want, you must relieve him if you can, or else direct him how he may be relieved; you must employ him some days, or else recommend him to be employed. But you are not charged to do beyond your ability, only to prefer a poor brother that is a good man and true, before any other poor people in the same circumstances."

All the old charges have a reference to Freemasons in the capacity of labourers, and as "*good men and true*," and no doubt had a beneficial effect. But the substance has been lost sight of, and the skeleton, or shadow, only retained. The mummery of the Druidical priests, with infinite additions of the same cast, is cherished as the desideratum of knowledge, calculated to complete the sum of human happiness and perfection. The corruptions of the society seem to have kept pace with those of the Christian religion. It is at this day as different to what it was, as the Christianity now professed is to the religion taught by Jesus Christ. In his time there were no Doctors of Divinity—Right Reverend Fathers in God, nor their Holinesses the Popes. Neither were there in the Society of Freemasons, at its commencement, any Grand Secretaries —Grand Treasurers—Knights of Malta—Captain-Generals— Generalissimos—Most Excellent Scribes—Most Excellent High-Priests—Most Excellent Kings, &c., &c.* To which might now, perhaps, very appropriately be added, Grand Bottle-holder and Cork-drawer.

The admission into the society of kings, princes, noblemen, bishops, and doctors in divinity, as patrons of the institution, has probably been the cause of so great change. These men, it may be presumed, brought much of their consequence with them into the lodge, and were, no doubt, addressed in a manner suitable to their supposed dignity in other stations. At any rate, by whatever means these high-sounding titles may have been introduced, they appear ridiculous when applied to

* This is true, if reference be made *to what it was*, when under the management of the *real masons*, the operatives previously to the ; 1717.

members of an institution founded for such purpose as that of the Masonic Society, and ought to be abandoned.

It is difficult, at this time, for members of the Society, or anybody else, to say what benefit is to be derived from the magical arts pretended to be practised in the lodges. The mystic rites and ceremonies of the Egyptian priests, handed down to the Druids by Pythagoras; the miraculous stories related of the ancient Jews; and the legendary tales of Roman Catholic superstition, fruitful sources of imposition, have been ransacked to find subjects for new degrees to be tacked to the Society of *Freemasons*. I have in my possession a list of forty-three degrees in what is called Freemasonry; one of which is the order of the Holy Ghost.

If, as here represented, all this mystical nonsense has been obtruded into the society, it may be asked, Why do men of sense attach themselves to it? I answer, many retire from it after taking two or three degrees; some have political or other sinister views which retain them; and, furthermore, most men are fond of distinction in some way. Any man of common understanding, by being punctual at the meetings, and paying strict attention to the ceremonies, may become warden, that is, overseer, or some other grand officer, even that of *Most Worshipful Grand Master;* and in the mean time keep mounting up the ladder, from mystery to mystery, till he arrives at the forty-third degree of perfection: which, however, in my opinion, cannot be of the least possible advantage to him here or hereafter, any further than the consequence it may give him. As to those who serve in the ranks, they probably consider themselves sufficiently honoured by being held as Brothers by those whom they think their superiors, and permitted to parade the streets with ribbons and white aprons, to the amazement of the *profane* vulgar.

Notwithstanding the remarks I have made, I am by no means inimical to the Masonic Society: for I believe it to be a liberal, social institution, in which persons of the most opposite opinions on religious and political subjects associate in the utmost harmony. By these friendly meetings, it is to be presumed, that party spirit, both in politics and religion, loses much of its asperity among the members; and that those, *who otherwise* might have entertained hostile feelings towards *each other,* become friends. In this point of view, the Society

deserves to be held in the highest estimation. For however laudable zeal may be in a just cause, when carried to excess, so as to excite personal ill-will towards others of contrary opinions, it degenerates into its kindred vice, leading to hatred and persecution. No good reason can be given why men of the same or similar societies should entertain greater partiality for one another, than for others of their fellow-men, any further than their merits when known may deserve; and to this it is generally limited among men of sense; still, in consequence of the obligations by which Masons are bound to each other, and a sort of bigotry in many, this partiality has had its good effects in mitigating the evils of war; and, for men who travel, a diploma from a Lodge has passed as a letter of recommendation in foreign countries.

As a charitable institution, the Masonic Society ought to be held in high consideration. The relief it grants to its members and their families in distress, is very considerable. But, unfortunately, as I am told, its means are very much exhausted by expenses incurred for refreshments at the regular meetings. If each member were required to pay for what he consumes at those meetings, the Society, in consequence of its numbers, by its income arising from annual contributions, fees of initiation, &c., would be enabled to do more in charity, perhaps, than any private society in existence.

As to what Mr. Paine has said upon this abstruse subject, I take the liberty of observing, that, in my opinion, notwithstanding the talents he has bestowed upon it, and the interest he has given to it, his remarks, made doubtless in the utmost sincerity, are calculated to perplex and embarrass readers not conversant in these matters, as much as those of any other author, whose design was to involve it in unintelligible mystery.

> "In thoughts more elevate, he reasoned high,
> But found no end, in wandering mazes lost."

ORIGIN OF FREE-MASONRY.

It is always understood that Free-Masons have a secret which they carefully conceal; but from everything that can be collected from their own accounts of Masonry, their real secret is no other than their origin, which but few of them understand; and those who do, envelope it in mystery.

The Society of Masons are distinguished into three classes or degrees. 1st. The Entered Apprentice. 2d. The Fellow Craft. 3d. The Master Mason.

The entered apprentice knows but little more of Masonry, than the use of signs and tokens, and certain steps and words, by which Masons can recognise each other, without being discovered by a person who is not a Mason. The fellow craft is not much better instructed in Masonry, than the entered apprentice. It is only in the Master Mason's lodge, that whatever knowledge remains of the origin of Masonry is preserved and concealed.

In 1730, Samuel Pritchard, member of a constituted lodge in England, published a treatise, entitled *Masonry Dissected*; and made oath before the Lord Mayor of London, that it was a true copy.

"Samuel Pritchard maketh oath that the copy hereunto annexed is a true and genuine copy in every particular."

In his work he has given the catechism, or examination, in question and answer, of the apprentices, the fellow craft, and the Master Mason. There was no difficulty in doing this, as it is mere form.

In his introduction he says, "the original institution of Masonry consisted in the foundation of the liberal arts and sciences, but more especially in Geometry, for at the building of the Tower of Babel, the art and mystery of Masonry was first introduced, and from thence handed down by Euclid, a *worthy* and excellent mathematician of the Egyptians; and he *communicated* it to Hiram, the Master Mason concerned in *building* Solomon's Temple in Jerusalem."

Besides the absurdity of deriving Masonry from the building of Babel, where, according to the story, the confusion of languages prevented the builders understanding each other, and consequently of communicating any knowledge they had there, is a glaring contradiction in point of chronology in the account he gives.

Solomon's Temple was built and dedicated 1004 years before the Christian era; and Euclid, as may be seen in the tables of chronology, lived 277 years before the same era. It was therefore impossible that Euclid could communicate anything to Hiram, since Euclid did not live till 700 years after the time of Hiram.

In 1783, Captain George Smith, inspector of the Royal Artillery Academy at Woolwich, in England, and Provincial Grand Master of Masonry for the county of Kent, published a treatise entitled, The Use and Abuse of Free-Masonry.

In his chapter of the antiquity of Masonry, he makes it to be coeval with creation. "When," says he, "the sovereign architect raised on Masonic principles the beauteous globe, and commanded that master science Geometry, to lay the planetary world, and to regulate by its laws the whole stupendous system in just unerring proportion, rolling round the central sun."

"But," continues he, "I am not at liberty publicly to undraw the curtain, and thereby to descant on this head; it is sacred, and will ever remain so; those who are honoured with the trust will not reveal it, and those who are ignorant of it cannot betray it." By this last part of the phrase, Smith means the two inferior classes, the fellow craft and the entered apprentice, for he says, in the next page of his work, "It is not every one that is barely initiated into Free-Masonry that is intrusted with all the mysteries thereto belonging; they are not attainable as things of course, nor by every capacity."

The learned, but unfortunate Doctor Dodd, Grand Chaplain of Masonry, in his oration at the dedication of Free-Mason's Hall, London, traces Masonry through a variety of stages. Masons, says he, are well informed from their own private and interior records, that the building of Solomon's Temple is an important era, from whence they derive many mysteries of their art. "Now (says he), be it remembered that this gr event took place above 1000 years before the Christian

and consequently more than a century before Homer, the first of the Grecian Poets, wrote; and above five centuries before Pythagoras brought from the east his sublime system of truly masonic instruction to illuminate our western world.

"But remote as this period is, we date not from thence the commencement of our art. For though it might owe to the wise and glorious King of Israel, some of its many mystic forms and hieroglyphic ceremonies, yet certainly, the art itself is coeval with man, the great subject of it.

"We trace," continues he, "its footsteps in the most distant, the most remote ages and nations of the world. We find it amongst the first and most celebrated civilizers of the East. We deduce it regularly from the first astronomers on the plains of Chaldea, to the wise and mystic kings and priests of Egypt, the sages of Greece, and the philosophers of Rome."

From these reports and declarations of Masons of the highest order in the institution, we see that Masonry, without publicly declaring so, lays claim to some divine communication from the Creator, in a manner different from, and unconnected with, the book which the Christians call the Bible; and the natural result from this is, that Masonry is derived from some very ancient religion, wholly independent of, and unconnected with that book.

To come then at once to the point, Masonry (as I shall show from the customs, ceremonies, hieroglyphics, and chronology of Masonry) is derived, and is the remains of the religion of the ancient Druids; who, like the magi of Persia and the priests of Heliopolis in Egypt, were priests of the Sun. They paid worship to this great luminary, as the great visible agent of a great invisible first cause, whom they styled, Time without limits.

The Christian religion and Masonry have one and the same common origin, both are derived from the worship of the sun; the difference between their origin is, that the Christian religion is a parody on the worship of the sun, in which they put a man whom they call Christ, in the place of the sun, and pay him the same adoration which was originally paid to the sun, as I have shown in the chapter on the origin of the Christian religion.*

** Referring to an unpublished portion of this work of which this chapter forms a part.*

In Masonry many of the ceremonies of the Druids are preserved in their original state, at least without any parody. With them the sun is still the sun; and his image in the form of the sun, is the great emblematical ornament of Masonic Lodges and Masonic dresses. It is the central figure on their aprons, and they wear it also pendant on the breast in their lodges and in their processions. It has the figure of a man, as at the head of the sun, as Christ is always represented.

At what period of antiquity, or in what nation, this religion was first established, is lost in the labyrinth of unrecorded times. It is generally ascribed to the ancient Egyptians, the Babylonians and Chaldeans, and reduced afterwards to a system regulated by the apparent progress of the sun through the twelve signs of the Zodiac by Zoroaster the lawgiver of Persia, from whence Pythagoras brought it into Greece. It is to these matters Dr. Dodd refers in the passage already quoted from his oration.

The worship of the sun, as the great visible agent of a great invisible first cause, time without limits, spread itself over a considerable part of Asia and Africa, from thence to Greece and Rome, through all ancient Gaul, and into Britain and Ireland.

Smith, in his chapter on the antiquity of Masonry in Britain, says, that "notwithstanding the obscurity which envelopes masonic history in that country, various circumstances contribute to prove that Free-Masonry was introduced into Britain about 1030 years before Christ."

It cannot be Masonry in its present state that Smith here alludes to. The Druids flourished in Britain at the period he speaks of, and it is from them that Masonry is descended. Smith has put the child in the place of the parent.

It sometimes happens, as well in writing as in conversation, that a person lets slip an expression that serves to unravel what he intends to conceal, and this is the case with Smith, for in the same chapter he says, "The Druids, when they committed anything to writing, used the Greek alphabet, and I am bold to assert that the most perfect remains of the Druid's rites and ceremonies are preserved in the customs and ceremonies of the Masons that are to be found existing among mankind. "My brethren," says he, "may be able to trace

them with greater exactness than I am at liberty to explain to the public."

This is a confession from a Master Mason, without intending it to be so understood by the public, that Masonry is the remains of the religion of the Druids; the reasons for the Masons keeping this a secret I shall explain in the course of this work.

As the study and contemplation of the Creator in the works of the creation, of which the sun, as the great visible agent of that Being, was the visible object of the adoration of Druids, all their religious rites and ceremonies had reference to the apparent progress of the sun through the twelve signs of the Zodiac, and his influence upon the earth. The Masons adopt the same practices. The roof of their temples or lodges is ornamented with a sun, and the floor is a representation of the variegated face of the earth, either by carpeting or by Mosaic work.

Free-Masons' Hall, in Great Queen street, Lincoln's Inn Fields, London, is a magnificent building, and cost upwards of 12,000 pounds sterling. Smith, in speaking of this building, says, (page 152), "The roof of this magnificent hall is, in all probability, the highest piece of finished architecture in Europe. In the centre of this roof, a most resplendent sun is represented in burnished gold, surrounded with the twelve signs of the Zodiac, with their respective characters:

♈	Aries	♎	Libra
♉	Taurus	♏	Scorpio
♊	Gemini	♐	Sagittarius
♋	Cancer	♑	Capricornus
♌	Leo	♒	Aquarius
♍	Virgo	♓	Pisces

After giving this description, he says, "The emblematical meaning of the sun is well known to the enlightened and inquisitive Free-Mason: and as the real sun is situated in the centre of the universe, so the emblematical sun is the centre of real Masonry. We all know, continues he, that the sun is the fountain of light, the source of the seasons, the cause of the vicissitudes of day and night, the parent of vegetation, *the friend* of man; hence the scientific Free-Mason only *knows the* reason why the sun is placed in the centre of this *beautiful* hall."

The Masons, in order to protect themselves from the persecution of the Christian church, have always spoken in a mystical manner of the figure of the sun in their lodges, or like the astronomer Lalande, who is a mason, been silent upon the subject. It is their secret, especially in Catholic countries, because the figure of the sun is the expressive criterion that denotes they are descended from the Druids, and that wise, elegant, philosophical religion, was the faith opposite to the faith of the gloomy Christian church.

The lodges of the Masons, if built for the purpose, are constructed in a manner to correspond with the apparent motion of the sun. They are situated East and West. The master's place is always in the East. In the examination of an entered apprentice, the master, among many other questions, asks him,

Q. How is the lodge situated?

A. East and West.

Q. Why so?

A. Because all churches and chapels are, or ought to be so.

This answer, which is mere catechismal form, is not an answer to the question. It does no more than remove the question a point further, which is, why ought all churches and chapels to be so? But as the entered apprentice is not initiated into the Druidical mysteries of Masonry, he is not asked any questions to which a direct answer would lead thereto.

Q. Where stands your master?

A. In the East.

Q. Why so?

A. As the sun rises in the East, and opens the day, so the master stands in the East (with his right hand upon his left breast, being a sign, and the square about his neck), to open the lodge, and set his men at work.

Q. Where stand your wardens?

A. In the West.

Q. What is their business?

A. As the sun sets in the West to close the day, so the wardens stand in the West (with their right hands upon their left breasts, being a sign, and the level and plumb rule about their necks), to close the lodge, and dismiss the men from labour, paying them their wages.

Here the name of the sun is mentioned, but it is proper

observe, that in this place it has reference only to labour or to the time of labour, and not to any religious Druidical rite or ceremony, as it would have with respect to the situation of lodges East and West. I have already observed in the chapter on the origin of the Christian religion, that the situation of churches East and West is taken from the worship of the sun, which rises in the East, and has not the least reference to the person called Jesus Christ. The Christians never bury their dead on the North side of a church;* and a Mason's Lodge always has, or is supposed to have, three windows, which are called fixed lights, to distinguish them from the movable lights of the sun and the moon. The master asks the entered apprentice,

Q. How are they (the fixed lights) situated?

A. East, West, and South.

Q. What are their uses?

A. To light the men to and from their work.

* This may have been the case formerly, but I believe, at present, very little attention is paid to the position of burying grounds, in respect to churches. In regard to "the situation of churches East and West," I find the rule was observed as late as the time of building St. Paul's Cathedral, which was finished in 1697. William Preston, in giving a description of this edifice, in his Illustrations of Masonry, says, "A strict regard to the situation of this Cathedral, due East and West, has given it an oblique appearance with respect to Ludgate-street in front; so that the great front gate in the surrounding iron rails, being made to regard the street in front, rather than the Church to which it belongs, the statue of queen Ann, that is exactly in the middle of the west front, is thrown on one side the straight approach from the gate to the Church, and gives an idea of the whole edifice being awry." In 1707, Sir Christopher Wren, the Architect of St. Paul's Cathedral, in a letter addressed to a joint commissioner with himself for building fifty churches in addition to others already built, to supply the place of those destroyed by the conflagration of 1666, observes, "I could wish that all the burials in Churches should be disallowed, which is not only unwholesome, but the pavements can never be kept even, nor pews upright; and if the Church-yard is close about the church, this also is inconvenient. It will be inquired, where then shall be the burials? I answer, in cemeteries seated in the out-skirts of the town. As to the situation of the Churches, I should propose they be brought as forward as possible into the larger and more open streets. Nor are we, I think, too nicely to observe East and West in the position, unless it falls out properly." See Anderson's *Book of Constitutions of the Free-Masons.*—EDITOR.

Q. Why are there no lights in the North?

A. Because the sun darts no rays from thence.

This, among numerous other instances, shows that the Christian religion, and Masonry, have one and the same common origin, the ancient worship of the sun.

The high festival of the Masons is on the day they call St. John's day; but every enlightened Mason must know that holding their festival on this day has no reference to the person called St. John; and that it is only to disguise the true cause of holding it on this day, that they call the day by that name. As there were Masons, or at least Druids, many centuries before the time of St. John, if such person ever existed, the holding their festival on this day must refer to some cause totally unconnected with John.

The case is, that the day called St. John's day is the 24th of June, and is what is called Midsummer-day. The sun is then arrived at the summer solstice; and with respect to his meridional altitude, or height at high noon, appears for some days to be of the same height. The astronomical longest day, like the shortest day, is not every year, on account of leap-year, on the same numerical day, and therefore the 24th of June is always taken for Midsummer-day; and it is in honour of the sun, which has then arrived at his greatest height, in our hemisphere, and not anything with respect to St. John, that this annual festival of the Masons, taken from the Druids, is celebrated on Midsummer-day.

Customs will often outlive the remembrance of their origin, and this is the case with respect to a custom still practised in Ireland, where the Druids flourished at the time they flourished in Britain. On the eve of St. John's day, that is, on the eve of Midsummer-day, the Irish light fires on the tops of the hills. This can have no reference to St. John; but it has emblematical reference to the sun, which on that day is at his highest summer elevation, and might in common language be said to have arrived at the top of the hill.

As to what Masons and books of Masonry tell us of Solomon's Temple at Jerusalem, it is nowise improbable that some masonic ceremonies may have been derived from the building of that temple, for the worship of the sun was in practice many centuries before the temple existed, or before the Israelites came out of *Egypt*. And we learn from the history of the

Jewish Kings, 2 Kings, chap. xxii. xxiii., that the worship of the sun was performed by the Jews in that temple. It is, however, much to be doubted, if it was done with the same scientific purity and religious morality, with which it was performed by the Druids, who, by all accounts that historically remain of them, were a wise, learned, and moral class of men. The Jews, on the contrary, were ignorant of astronomy, and of science in general, and if a religion founded upon astronomy fell into their hands, it is almost certain it would be corrupted. We do not read in the history of the Jews, whether in the Bible or elsewhere, that they were the inventors or the improvers of any one art or science. Even in the building of this temple, the Jews did not know how to square and frame the timber for beginning and carrying on the work, and Solomon was obliged to send to Hiram, king of Tyre (Zidon), to procure workmen; "for thou knowest (says Solomon to Hiram, 1 Kings, chap. v. ver. 6), that there is not among us any that can skill to hew timber like unto the Zidonians." This temple was more properly Hiram's temple than Solomon's, and if the Masons derive anything from the building of it, they owe it to the Zidonians and not to the Jews.—But to return to the worship of the sun in this temple.

It is said, 2 Kings, chap. xxiii. ver. 8, "And King Josiah put down all the idolatrous priests that burned incense unto the sun, the moon, the planets, and all the host of heaven."—And it is said at the 11th ver. "and he took away the horses that the kings of Judah had given to the sun, at the entering in of the house of the Lord, and burned the chariots of the sun with fire, ver. 13, and the high places that were before Jerusalem, which were on the right hand of the mount of corruption, which Solomon the King of Israel had builded for Astoreth, the abomination of the Zidonians (the very people that built the temple) did the king defile."

Besides these things, the description that Josephus gives of the decorations of this temple, resembles on a large scale those of a Mason's lodge. He says that the distribution of the several parts of the temple of the Jews represented all nature, particularly the parts most apparent of it, as the sun, the moon, the planets, the zodiac, the earth, the elements; and that the *system of the* world was retraced there by numerous ingenious *emblems.* These, in all probability, are what Josiah, in his

ignorance, calls the abominations of the Zidonians.* Everything, however, drawn from this temple,† and applied to Masonry, still refers to the worship of the sun, however corrupted or misunderstood by the Jews, and, consequently, to the religion of the Druids.

Another circumstance which shows that Masonry is derived from some ancient system, prior to, and unconnected with, the Christian religion, is the chronology, or method of counting time, used by the Masons in the records of their lodges. They make no use of what is called the Christian era; and they reckon their months numerically, as the ancient Egyptians did, and as the Quakers do now. I have by me, a record of a French lodge, at the time the late Duke of Orleans, then Duke de Chartres, was Grand Master of Masonry in France. It begins as follows: "*Le trentieme jour du sixieme mois de l'an de la V. L. cinq mil sept cent soixante trois;*" that is, the thirteenth day of the sixth month of the year of the venerable lodge, five thousand seven hundred and seventy-three. By what I observe in English books of Masonry, the English Masons use the initials A. L. and not V. L. By A. L. they mean in the year of the lodge,‡ as the Christians by A. D. mean in the year of our Lord. But A. L. like V. L. refers to the same chronological era, that is, to the supposed time of

* Smith, in speaking of a Lodge, says, when the Lodge is revealed to an entering Mason, it discovers to him *a representation of the world;* in which, from the wonders of nature, we are led to contemplate her great Original, and worship him from his mighty works; and we are thereby also moved to exercise those moral and social virtues which become mankind as the servants of the great Architect of the world.

† It may not be improper here to observe, that the law called the law of Moses could not have been in existence at the time of building this temple. Here is the likeness of things in heaven above, and in the earth beneath. And we read in 1 Kings, chap. 6, 7, that Solomon made cherubs and cherubims, that he carved all the walls of the house round about with cherubims and palm-trees, and open flowers, and that he made a molten sea, placed on twelve oxen, and the ledges of it were ornamented with lions, oxen, and cherubims; all this is contrary to the law, called the law of Moses.

‡ V. L. used by French Masons, are the initials of Vraie Lumiere, true light; and A. L., used by the English, are the initials of Anno Lucis, in the year of light. But as in both cases, as Mr. Paine observes, reference is had to the supposed time of the creation, his mistake is of no consequence.—EDITOR

the creation. In the chapter on the origin of the Christian religion, I have shown that the cosmogony, that is, the account of the creation, with which the book of Genesis opens, has been taken and been mutilated from the Zend-Avesta of Zoroaster, and is fixed as a preface to the Bible, after the Jews returned from captivity in Babylon, and that the rabbins of the Jews do not hold their account in Genesis to be a fact, but mere allegory. The six thousand years in the Zend-Avesta, is changed or interpolated into six days in the account of Genesis. The Masons appear to have chosen the same period, and perhaps to avoid the suspicion and prosecution of the church, have adopted the era of the world, as the era of Masonry. The V. L. of the French, and A. L. of the English Masons answer to the A. M. Anno Mundi, or year of the world.

Though the Masons have taken many of their ceremonies and hieroglyphics from the ancient Egyptians, it is certain they have not taken their chronology from thence. If they had, the church would soon have sent them to the stake; as the chronology of the Egyptians, like that of the Chinese, goes many thousand years beyond the Bible chronology.

The religion of the Druids, as before said, was the same as the religion of the ancient Egyptians. The priests of Egypt were the professors and teachers of science, and were styled priests of Heliopolis, that is, of the *city of the sun*. The Druids in Europe, who were the same order of men, have their name from the Teutonic or ancient German language; the Germans being anciently called Teutones. The word Druid signifies a *wise man*. In Persia they were called magi, which signifies the same thing.

"Egypt," says Smith, "from whence we derive many of our mysteries, has always borne a distinguished rank in history, and was once celebrated above all others for its antiquities, learning, opulence, and fertility. In their system, their principal hero-gods, Osiris and Isis, theologically represented the Supreme Being and universal nature; and physically, the two great celestial luminaries, the sun and the moon, by whose influence all nature was actuated. The experienced brethren of the Society (says Smith in a note to this passage) are well informed what affinity these symbols bear to Masonry, and *why they* are used in all Masonic Lodges."

In speaking of the apparel of the Masons in their Lodges,

part of which, as we see in their public processions, is a white leather apron, he says, "the Druids were apparelled in white at the time of their sacrifices and solemn offices. The Egyptian priests of Osiris wore snow-white cotton. The Grecian and most other priests wore white garments. As Masons we regard the principles of those *who were the first worshippers of the true God*, imitate their apparel, and assume the badge of innocence.

"The Egyptians," continues Smith, "in the earliest ages, constituted a great number of Lodges, but with assiduous care kept their secrets of Masonry from all strangers. These secrets have been imperfectly handed down to us by tradition only, and ought to be kept undiscovered to the labourers, craftsmen, and apprentices, till by good behaviour and long study, they become better acquainted in geometry and the liberal arts, and thereby qualified for Masters and Wardens, which is seldom or ever the case with English Masons."

Under the head of Free-Masonry, written by the astronomer Lalande, in the French Encyclopedia, I expected from his great knowledge in astronomy, to have found much information on the origin of Masonry; for what connexion can there be between any institution and the sun and twelve signs of the zodiac, if there be not something in that institution or in its origin, that has reference to astronomy? Everything used as an hieroglyphic, has reference to the subject and purpose for which it is used; and we are not to suppose the Free-Masons, among whom are many very learned and scientific men, to be such idiots as to make use of astronomical signs without some astronomical purpose.

But I was much disappointed in my expectation from Lalande. In speaking of the origin of Masonry, he says, "*L'origine de la maconnerie se perd, comme tant d'autres, dans l'obscurite des temps;*" that is, the origin of Masonry, like many others, loses itself in the obscurity of time. When I came to this expression, I supposed Lalande a Mason, and on inquiry found he was. This *passing over* saved him from the embarrassment which Masons are under respecting the disclosure of their origin, and which they are sworn to conceal. There is a society of Masons in Dublin who take the name of Druids; these Masons must be supposed to have a reason for taking *that name*.

I come now to speak of the cause of secrecy u
Masons. The natural source of secrecy is fea
any new religion overruns a former religion, the
of the new become the persecutors of the old. We
all the instances that history brings before us. Wh
the priest and Shaphan the scribe, in the reign of ki
found, or pretended to find the law, called the law
a thousand years after the time of Moses, and it d
pear from the 2d book of Kings, chapters 22, 23,
law was ever practised or known before the time of
established that law as a national religion, and p
priests of the sun to death. When the Christian rel
ran the Jewish religion, the Jews were the continu
of persecution in all Christian countries. When t
tant religion in England overran the Roman Catholi
it was made death for a Catholic priest to be foun
land. As this has been the case in all the instance
any knowledge of, we are obliged to admit it with
the case in question, and that when the Christian rel
ran the religion of the Druids in Italy, ancient Ga
and Ireland, the Druids became the subjects of p
This would naturally and necessarily oblige such
remained attached to their original religion to meet
and under the strongest injunctions of secrecy. T
depended upon it. A false brother might expos
of many of them to destruction; and from the rem
religion of the Druids, thus preserved, arose the
which, to avoid the name of Druid, took that of M
practised, under this new name, the rights and cer
Druids.

LETTER

TO

SAMUEL ADAMS.

MY DEAR AND VENERABLE FRIEND:

I received with great pleasure your friendly and affectionate letter of Nov. 30th, and I thank you also for the frankness of it. Between men in pursuit of truth, and whose object is the happiness of man both here and hereafter, there ought to be no reserve. Even error has a claim to indulgence, if not to respect, when it is believed to be truth. I am obliged to you for your affectionate remembrance of what you style my services in awakening the public mind to a declaration of independence, and supporting it after it was declared. I also, like you, have often looked back on those times, and have thought, that if independence had not been declared at the time it was, the public mind could not have been brought up to it afterwards. It will immediately occur to you, who were so intimately acquainted with the situation of things at that time, that I allude to the black times of *seventy-six;* for though I know, and you, my friend, also know, they were no other than the natural consequences of the military blunders of that campaign, the country might have viewed them as proceeding from a natural inability to support its cause against the enemy, and have sunk under the despondency of that misconceived idea. This was the impression against which it was necessary the country should be strongly animated.

I now come to the second part of your letter, on which I shall be as frank with you as you are with me. "But (say you) when I *heard* you had turned your mind to a defence of *infidelity*, I felt myself much astonished," &c. What, my good friend! do you call believing in God *infidelity?* for that is the great point mentioned in the Age of Reason against all *divided beliefs* and *allegorical* divinities. The Bishop of

Llandaff (Dr. Watson) not only acknowledges this, but pays me some compliments upon it, in his answer to the second part of that work. "There is (says he) a philosophical sublimity in some of your ideas, when speaking of the Creator of the Universe."

What, then (my much esteemed friend, for I do not respect you the less because we differ, and that perhaps not much, in religious sentiments), what, I ask, is the thing called *infidelity?* If we go back to your ancestors and mine, three or four hundred years ago,—for we must have fathers and grandfathers, or we should not have been here,—we shall find them praying to saints and virgins, and believing in purgatory and transubstantiation; and therefore all of us are infidels, according to our forefathers' belief. If we go back to times more ancient we shall again be infidels, according to the belief of some other forefathers.

The case, my friend, is, that the world has been overrun with fable and creed of human invention, with sectaries of whole nations against other nations, and sectaries of those sectaries in each of them against each other. Every sectary, except the Quakers, have been persecutors. Those who fled from persecution, persecuted in their turn; and it is this confusion of creeds that has filled the world with persecution, and deluged it with blood. Even the depredation on your commerce by the Barbary powers, sprang from the crusades of the church against those powers. It was a war of creed against creed, each boasting of God for its author, and reviling each other with the name of infidel. If I do not believe as you believe, it proves that you do not believe as I believe, and this is all that it proves.

There is, however, one point of union wherein all religions meet, and that is in the first article of every man's creed, and of every nation's creed, that has any creed at all, *I believe in God.* Those who rest here,—and there are millions who do,—cannot be wrong as far as their creed goes. Those who choose to go further *may be wrong*, for it is impossible that all can be right, since there is so much contradiction among them. The first, therefore, are, in my opinion, on the safest side.

I presume you are so far acquainted with ecclesiastical history as to know, and the Bishop who has answered me has been obliged to acknowledge the fact, that the books that com-

pose the New Testament were voted by *yeas* and *nays* to be the Word of God, as you now vote a law, by the Popish Councils of Nice and Laodicea, about fourteen hundred and fifty years ago. With respect to the fact there is no dispute, neither do I mention it for the sake of controversy. This vote may appear authority enough to some, and not authority enough to others. It is proper, however, that everybody should know the fact.

With respect to the Age of Reason, which you so much condemn, and that, I believe, without having read it, for you say only that you *heard* of it, I will inform you of a circumstance, because you cannot know it by other means.

I have said, in the first page of the first part of that work, that it had long been my intention to publish my thoughts upon religion, but that I had reserved it to a later time of life. I have now to inform you why I wrote it, and published it at the time I did.

In the first place, I saw my life in continual danger. My friends were falling as fast as the guillotine could cut their heads off, and as I expected every day the same fate, I resolved to begin my work. I appeared to myself to be on my death-bed, for death was on every side of me, and I had no time to lose. This accounts for my writing at the time I did, and so nicely did the time and intention meet, that I had not finished the first part of the work more than six hours, before I was arrested, and taken to prison. Joel Barlow was with me, and knows the fact.

In the second place, the people of France were running headlong into atheism, and I had the work translated and published in their own language, to stop them in that career, and fix them to the first article (as I have before said) of every man's creed, who has any creed at all, *I believe in God.* I endangered my own life, in the first place, by opposing in the Convention the executing of the King, and labouring to show they were trying the monarch and not the man, and that the crimes imputed to him were the crimes of the monarchical system; and endangered it a second time by opposing atheism, and yet *some* of your priests, for I do not believe that all are perverse, cry out, in the *war-whoop* of monarchical priestcraft, what an infidel! what a wicked man is Thomas Paine! They

might as well add, for he believes in God, and is against shedding blood.

But all this *war-whoop* of the pulpit has some concealed object. Religion is not the cause, but is the stalking horse. They put it forward to conceal themselves behind it. It is not a secret that there has been a party composed of the leaders of the Federalists, for I do not include all Federalists with their leaders, who have been working by various means for several years past, to overturn the Federal Constitution established on the representative system, and place government in the new world on the corrupt system of the old. To accomplish this a large standing army was necessary, and as a pretence for such an army, the danger of a foreign invasion must be bellowed forth, from the pulpit, from the press, and by their public orators.

I am not of a disposition inclined to suspicion. It is in its nature a mean and cowardly passion, and upon the whole, even admitting error into the case, it is better; I am sure it is more generous to be wrong on the side of confidence, than on the side of suspicion. But I know as a fact, that the English Government distributes annually fifteen hundred pounds sterling among the Presbyterian ministers in England, and one hundred among those of Ireland;* and when I hear of the strange discourses of some of your ministers and professors of colleges, I cannot, as the Quakers say, find freedom in my mind to acquit them. Their anti-revolutionary doctrines invite suspicion, even against one's will, and in spite of one's charity to believe well of them.

As you have given me one Scripture phrase, I will give you another for those ministers. It is said in Exodus, chapter xxiii., verse 28, "Thou shalt not revile the Gods, nor curse the ruler of thy people." But those ministers, such I mean as Dr. Emmons, curse ruler and people both, for the majority are, politically, the people, and it is those who have chosen the ruler whom they curse. As to the first part of the verse, that of *not reviling the Gods*, it makes no part of my Scripture: I have but one God.

* There must undoubtedly be a very gross mistake in respect to the *amount* said to be expended; the sums intended to be expressed were *probably* fifteen hundred thousand, and one hundred thousand pounds. —EDITOR.

Since I began this letter, for I write it by piece-meals as I have leisure, I have seen the four letters that passed between you and John Adams. In your first letter you say, "Let divines and philosophers, statesmen and patriots, unite their endeavours to *renovate the age* by inculcating in the minds of youth *the fear and love of the Deity, and universal philanthropy.*" Why, my dear friend, this is exactly *my* religion, and is the whole of it. That you may have an idea that the Age of Reason (for I believe you have not read it) inculcates this reverential fear and love of the Deity, I will give you a paragraph from it.

"Do we want to contemplate his power? We see it in the immensity of the Creation. Do we want to contemplate his wisdom? We see it in the unchangeable order by which the incomprehensible whole is governed. Do we want to contemplate his munificence? We see it in the abundance with which he fills the earth. Do we want to contemplate his mercy? We see it in his not withholding that abundance even from the unthankful."

As I am fully with you in your first part, that respecting the Deity, so am I in your second, that of *universal philanthropy;* by which I do not mean merely the sentimental benevolence of wishing well, but the practical benevolence of doing good. We cannot serve the Deity in a manner we serve those who cannot do without that service. He needs no services from us. We can add nothing to eternity. But it is in our power to render a service *acceptable* to him, and that is not by praying, but by endeavouring to make his creatures happy. A man does not serve God when he prays, for it is himself he is trying to serve; and as to hiring or paying men to pray, as if the Deity needed instruction, it is in my opinion an abomination. One good schoolmaster is of more use and of more value than a load of such parsons as Dr. Emmons, and some others.

You, my dear and much respected friend, are now far in the vale of years; I have yet, I believe, some years in store, for I have a good state of health and a happy mind; I take care of both, by nourishing the first with temperance, and the latter with abundance.

This, I believe, you will allow to be the true philosophy of life. *You will see* by my third letter to the citizens of

United States, that I have been exposed to, and preserved through many dangers; but instead of buffeting the Deity with prayers, as if I distrusted him, or must dictate to him, I reposed myself on his protection: and you, my friend, will find, even in your last moments, more consolation in the silence of resignation than in the murmuring wish of prayer.

In everything which you say in your second letter to John Adams, respecting our rights as men and citizens in this world, I am perfectly with you. On other points we have to answer to our Creator, and not to each other. The key of heaven is not in the keeping of any sect, nor ought the road to it to be obstructed by any. Our relation to each other in this world is as men, and the man who is a friend to man and to his rights, let his religious opinions be what they may, is a good citizen, to whom I can give, as I ought to do, and as every other ought, the right hand of fellowship, and to none with more hearty good will, my dear friend, than to you.

THOMAS PAINE.

Federal City, Jan. 1, 1803.

EXTRACT FROM A LETTER

TO

ANDREW A. DEAN.*

RESPECTED FRIEND:

I received your friendly letter, for which I am obliged to you. It is three weeks ago to-day (Sunday, Aug. 15) that I was struck with a fit of an apoplexy, that deprived me of all sense and motion. I had neither pulse nor breathing, and the people about me supposed me dead. I had felt exceedingly well that day, and had just taken a slice of bread and butter, for supper, and was going to bed. The fit took me on the stairs, as suddenly as if I had been shot through the head; and I got so very much hurt by the fall, that I have not been able to get in and out of bed since that day, otherwise than being lifted out in a blanket, by two persons; yet all this while my mental faculties have remained as perfect as I ever enjoyed them. I consider the scene I have passed through as an experiment on dying, and I find that death has no terrors for me. As to the people called Christians, they have no evidence that their religion is true.† There is no more proof

* Mr. Dean rented Mr. Paine's farm at New Rochelle.

† Mr. Paine's entering upon the subject of religion on this occasion, it may be presumed, was occasioned by the following passage in Mr. Dean's letter to him, viz.

"I have read with good attention your manuscript on dreams, and examination on the prophecies in the bible. I am now searching the old prophecies, and comparing the same to those said to be quoted in the New Testament. I confess the comparison is a matter worthy of our serious attention; I know not the result till I finish; then, if y' be living, I shall communicate the same to you: I hope to be w you as soon as possible."

that the Bible is the word of God, than that the Koran of Mahomet is the word of God. It is education makes all the difference. Man, before he begins to think for himself, is as much the child of habit in *Creeds* as he is in ploughing and sowing. Yet creeds, like opinions, prove nothing.

Where is the evidence that the person called Jesus Christ is the begotten Son of God? The case admits not of evidence either to our senses, or our mental faculties; neither has God given to man any talent by which such a thing is comprehensible. It cannot therefore be an object for faith to act upon, for faith is nothing more than an assent the mind gives to something it sees cause to believe is fact. But priests, preachers, and fanatics, put imagination in the place of faith, and it is the nature of the imagination to believe without evidence.

If Joseph the carpenter dreamed (as the book of Matthew, chap. 1st, says he did), that his betrothed wife, Mary, was with child, by the Holy Ghost, and that an angel told him so; I am not obliged to put faith in his dream, nor do I put any, for I put no faith in my own dreams, and I should be weak and foolish indeed to put faith in the dreams of others.

The Christian religion is derogatory to the Creator in all its articles. It puts the Creator in an inferior point of view, and places the Christian Devil above him. It is he, according to the absurd story in Genesis, that outwits the Creator, in the garden of Eden, and steals from him his favourite creature, man, and at last, obliges him to beget a son, and put that son to death, to get man back again, and this the priests of the Christian religion call redemption.

Christian authors exclaim against the practice of offering up human sacrifices, which, they say, is done in some countries; and those authors make those exclamations without ever reflecting that their own doctrine of salvation is founded on a human sacrifice. They are saved, they say, by the blood of Christ. The Christian religion begins with a dream, and ends with a murder.

As I am now well enough to set up some hours in the day, though not well enough to get up without help, I employ myself as I have always done, in endeavouring to bring man to the right use of the reason that God has given him, and to direct his mind immediately to his Creator, and not to fanciful

secondary beings called mediators, as if God was superannuated or ferocious.

As to the book called the Bible, it is blasphemy to call it the word of God. It is a book of lies and contradiction, and a history of bad times and bad men. There is but a few good characters in the whole book. The fable of Christ and his twelve apostles, which is a parody on the sun and the twelve signs of the Zodiac, copied from the ancient religions of the eastern world, is the least hurtful part. Everything told of Christ has reference to the sun. His reported resurrection is at sun-rise, and that on the first day of the week; that is, on the day anciently dedicated to the sun, and from thence called Sunday; in Latin *Dies Solis*, the day of the sun; as the next day, Monday, is Moon-day. But there is not room in a letter to explain these things.

While man keeps to the belief of one God, his reason unites with his creed. He is not shocked with contradictions and horrid stories. His Bible is the heavens and the earth. He beholds his Creator in all his works, and everything he beholds inspires him with reverence and gratitude. From the goodness of God to all, he learns his duty to his fellow man, and stands self-reproved when he transgresses it. Such a man is no persecutor.

But when he multiplies his creed with imaginary things, of which he can have neither evidence nor conception, such as the tale of the Garden of Eden, the talking serpent, the fall of man, the dreams of Joseph the carpenter, the pretended resurrection and ascension, of which there is even no historical relation, for no historian of those times mentions such a thing, he gets into the pathless region of confusion, and turns either fanatic or hypocrite. (He forces his mind, and pretends to believe what he does not believe.) This is in general the case with the methodists. Their religion is all creed and no morals.

I have now, my friend, given you a *fac simile* of my mind on the subject of religion and creeds, and my wish is, that you make this letter as publicly known as you find opportunities of doing.

Yours in friendship,
THOMAS PAINE.

N. Y. Aug. 1806.

MISCELLANEOUS PIECES.

EXTRACTED FROM THE "PROSPECT, OR VIEW OF THE MORAL WORLD," A PERIODICAL WORK, EDITED AND PUBLISHED BY ELIHU PALMER, AT NEW YORK, IN THE YEAR 1804.

The following fugitive pieces were written by Mr. Paine occasionally to pass off an idle hour, and communicated for the Prospect, to aid his friend, Mr. Palmer, in support of that publication. Perhaps, in some cases, it may appear that the same ideas have been expressed in his other works; but, if so, the various points of view, in which they are here placed, it is presumed, will not fail to give an interest to these miscellaneous remarks.

The same signatures are continued as were subscribed to the original communications.

REMARKS ON R. HALL'S SERMON.

[*The following piece, obligingly communicated by Mr. Paine, for the Prospect, is full of that acuteness of mind, perspicuity of expression, and clearness of discernment for which this excellent author is so remarkable in all his writings.*]

ROBERT HALL, a protestant minister in England, preached and published a sermon against what he calls "*Modern Infidelity.*" A copy of it was sent to a gentleman in America, with a request for his opinion thereon. That gentleman sent it to a friend of his in New-York, with the request written on the cover—and this last sent it to Thomas Paine, who wrote

the following observations on the blank leaf at the end of the Sermon.

The preacher of the foregoing sermon speaks a great deal about *infidelity*, but does not define what he means by it. His harangue is a general exclamation. Everything, I suppose, that is not in his creed is infidelity with him, and his creed is infidelity with me. Infidelity is believing falsely. If what Christians believe is not true, it is the Christians that are the infidels.

The point between Deists and Christians is not about doctrine, but about fact—for if the things believed by the Christians to be facts, are not facts, the doctrine founded thereon falls of itself. There is such a book as the Bible, but is it a fact that the Bible is *revealed religion?* The Christians cannot prove it is. They put tradition in place of evidence, and tradition is not proof. If it were, the reality of witches could be proved by the same kind of evidence.

The Bible is a history of the times of which it speaks, and history is not revelation. The obscene and vulgar stories in the Bible are as repugnant to our ideas of the purity of a divine Being, as the horrid cruelties and murders it ascribes to him, are repugnant to our ideas of his justice. It is the reverence of the *Deists* for the attributes of the DEITY, that causes them to reject the Bible.

Is the account which the Christian church giv of the person called Jesus Christ, a fact or a fable? Is it a t that he was begotten by the Holy Ghost? The Christians c. o prove it, for the case does not admit of proof. The thi. s lled miracles in the Bible, such for instance as raising d, admitted, *if true*, of ocular demonstration, but the sto conception of Jesus Christ in the womb is a case beyond o cle, for it did not admit of demonstration. Mary, the repu mother of Jesus, who must be supposed to know best, never said so herself, and all the evidence of it is, that the book of Matthew says, that Joseph dreamed an angel told him so. Had an old maid of two or three hundred years of age, brought forth a child, it would have been much better presumptive evidence of a supernatural conception, than Matthew's story of Joseph's dream about his young wife.

Is it a fact that Jesus Christ died for the sins of the world, and *how is it* proved? If a God, he could not die, and as

man he could not redeem; how then is this redemption proved to be fact? It is said that Adam eat of the forbidden fruit, commonly called an apple, and thereby subjected himself and all his posterity for ever to eternal damnation. This is worse than visiting the sins of the fathers upon the children unto the *third and fourth generations.* But how was the death of Jesus Christ to affect or alter the case?—Did God thirst for blood? If so, would it not have been better to have crucified Adam at once upon the forbidden tree, and made a new man? Would not this have been more creator-like, than repairing the old one? Or, did God, when he made Adam, supposing the story to be true, exclude himself from the right of making another? Or impose on himself the necessity of breeding from the old stock? Priests should first prove facts, and deduce doctrines from them afterwards. But instead of this, they assume everything, and prove nothing. Authorities drawn from the Bible are no more than authorities drawn from other books, unless it can be proved that the Bible is revelation.

This story of the redemption will not stand examination. That man should redeem himself from the sin of eating an apple, by committing a murder on Jesus Christ, is the strangest system of religion ever set up. Deism is perfect purity compared with this. It is an established principle with the Quakers not to shed blood—suppose then all Jerusalem had been Quakers when Christ lived, there would have been nobody to crucify him, and in that case, if man is redeemed by his blood, which is the belief of the church, there could have been no redemption—and the people of Jerusalem must all have been damned, because they were too good to commit murder. The Christian system of religion is an outrage on common sense. (Why is man afraid to think?)

Why do not the Christians, to be consistent, make saints of Judas and Pontius Pilate, for they were the persons who accomplished the act of salvation. The merit of a sacrifice, if there can be any merit in it, was never in the thing sacrificed, but in the persons offering up the sacrifice—and therefore Judas and Pontius Pilate ought to stand first on the calendar of saints.

THOMAS PAINE.

OF THE WORD RELIGION,

AND OTHER WORDS OF UNCERTAIN SIGNIFICATION.

THE word religion is a word of forced application when used with respect to the worship of God. The root of the word is the Latin verb *ligo*, to tie or bind. From *ligo*, comes *religo*, to tie or bind over again, or make more fast—from *religo* comes the substantive *religio*, which with the addition of *n* makes the English substantive religion. The French use the word properly—when a woman enters a convent, she is called a *noviciate*, that is, she is upon trial or probation. When she takes the oath, she is called a *religieuse*, that is, she is tied or bound by that oath to the performance of it. We use the word in the same kind of sense when we say we will religiously perform the promise that we make.

But the word, without referring to its etymology, has, in the manner it is used, no definitive meaning, because it does not designate what religion a man is of. There is the religion of the Chinese, of the Tartars, of the Bramins, of the Persians, of the Jews, of the Turks, &c.

The word Christianity is equally as vague as the word religion. No two sectaries can agree what it is. It is a *lo here* and *lo there*. The two principal sectaries, Papists and Protestants, have often cut each others' throats about it:—The Papists call the Protestants heretics, and the Protestants call the Papists idolaters. The minor sectaries have shown the same spirit of rancour, but as the civil restrains them from blood, they content themselves with preaching damnation against each other.

The word *protestant* has a positive signification in the sense it is used. It means protesting against the authority of the Pope, and this is the only article in which the protestants agree. In every other sense, with respect to religion, the word protestant is as vague as the word Christian. When we say an episcopalian, a presbyterian, a baptist, a quaker, we know what those persons are, and what tenets they hold—but *when we say* a Christian, we know he is not a Jew nor a Ma-

hometan, but we know not if he be a trinitarian or an anti-trinitarian, a believer in what is called the immaculate conception, or a disbeliever, a man of seven sacraments, or of two sacraments, or of none. The word Christian describes what a man is not, but not what he is.

The word *Theology*, from *Theos*, the Greek word for God, and meaning the study and knowledge of God, is a word, that strictly speaking, belongs to Theists or Deists, and not to the Christians. The head of the Christian church is the person called Christ—but the head of the church of the Theists, or Deists, as they are more commonly called, from *Deus*, the Latin word for God, is God himself, and therefore the word Theology belongs to that church which has Theos or God for its head, and not to the Christian church, which has the person called Christ for its head. Their technical word is *Christianity*, and they cannot agree what Christianity is.

The words revealed religion, and natural religion, require also explanation. They are both invented terms, contrived by the church for the support of priestcraft. With respect to the first, there is no evidence of any such thing, except in the universal revelation that God has made of his power, his wisdom, his goodness, in the structure of the universe, and in all the works of creation. We have no cause or ground from anything we behold in those works, to suppose God would deal partially by mankind, and reveal knowledge to one nation and withhold it from another, and then damn them for not knowing it. The sun shines an equal quantity of light all over the world—and mankind in all ages and countries are endued with reason, and blessed with sight, to read the visible works of God in the creation, and so intelligible is this book, that *he that runs may read*. We admire the wisdom of the ancients, yet they had no bibles, nor books called revelation. They cultivated the reason that God gave them, studied him in his works, and arose to eminence.

As to the Bible, whether true or fabulous, it is a history, and history is not revelation. If Solomon had seven hundred wives and three hundred concubines, and if Sampson slept in Delilah's lap, and she cut his hair off, the relation of those *things is* mere history, that needed no revelation from heaven *to tell it;* neither does it need any revelation to tell us that *Sampson* was a fool for his pains, and Solomon too.

As to the expression so often used in the Bible, that *the word of the Lord* came to such an one, or such an one, it was the fashion of speaking in those times, like the expression used by a Quaker, that the *spirit moveth him*, or that used by priests, that they *have a call*. We ought not to be deceived by phrases because they are ancient. But if we admit the supposition that God would condescend to reveal himself in words, we ought not to believe it would be in such idle and profligate stories as are in the Bible, and it is for this reason, among others, which our reverence to God inspires, that the Deists deny that the book called the Bible is the word of God, or that it is revealed religion.

With respect to the term natural religion, it is upon the face of it the opposite of artificial religion, and it is impossible for any man to be certain that what is called *revealed religion*, is not artificial. Man has the power of making books, inventing stories of God, and calling them revelation, or the word of God. The Koran exists as an instance that this can be done, and we must be credulous, indeed, to suppose that this is the only instance, and Mahomet the only impostor. The Jews could match him, and the Church of Rome could overmatch the Jews. The Mahometans believe the Koran, the Christians believe the Bible, and it is education makes all the difference.

Books, whether Bibles or Korans, carry no evidence of being the work of any other power than man. It is only that which man cannot do that carries the evidence of being the work of a superior power. Man could not invent and make a Universe; he could not invent Nature, for Nature is of divine origin. It is the laws by which the Universe is governed. When, therefore, we look through Nature up to Nature's God, we are in the right road of happiness; but when we trust to books as the word of God, and confide in them as revealed religion, we are afloat on an ocean of uncertainty, and shatter into contending factions. The term, therefore, *natural religion*, explains itself to be *divine religion*, and the term *revealed religion* involves in it the suspicion of being *artificial*.

To show the necessity of understanding the meaning of words, I will mention an instance of a minister, I believe of the Episcopalian church of Newark, in Jersey. He wrote and published a book, and entitled it "An Antidote to Deism." An

antidote to *Deism*, must be *Atheism*. It has no other antidote—for what can be an antidote to the belief of a God, but the disbelief of God? Under the tuition of such pastors, what but ignorance and false information can be expected?

T. P.

OF CAIN AND ABEL.

THE story of Cain and Abel is told in the fourth chapter of Genesis; Cain was the elder brother, and Abel the younger, and Cain killed Abel. The Egyptian story of Typhon and Osiris, and the Jewish story in Genesis of Cain and Abel, have the appearance of being the same story differently told, and that it came originally from Egypt.

In the Egyptian story, Typhon and Osiris are brothers; Typhon is the elder, and Osiris the younger, and Typhon kills Osiris. The story is an allegory on darkness and light; Typhon, the elder brother, is darkness, because darkness was supposed to be more ancient than light: Osiris is the good light who rules during the summer months, and brings forth the fruits of the earth, and is the favourite, as Abel is said to have been, for which Typhon hates him; and when the winter comes, and cold and darkness overspread the earth, Typhon is represented as having killed Osiris out of malice, as Cain is said to have killed Abel.

The two stories are alike in their circumstances and their event, and are probably but the same story; what corroborates this opinion is, that the fifth chapter of Genesis historically contradicts the reality of the story of Cain and Abel in the fourth chapter, for though the name of *Seth*, a son of Adam, is mentioned in the fourth chapter, he is spoken of in the fifth chapter as if he was the first-born of Adam. The chapter begins thus:—

"This is the book of the *generations* of Adam. In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God created he him. Male and female created he them, and blessed them, and *called* their name Adam in the day when they were created. *And Adam* lived an hundred and thirty years and begat a *son, in his* own likeness and after his own image, and called

his name *Seth.*" The rest of the chapter goes on with the genealogy.

Anybody reading this chapter cannot suppose there were any sons born before *Seth.* The chapter begins with what is called *the creation of Adam*, and calls itself the book of the *generations of Adam*, yet no mention is made of such persons as Cain and Abel; one thing, however, is evident on the face of these two chapters, which is, that the same person is not the writer of both; the most blundering historian could not have committed himself in such a manner.

Though I look on everything in the first ten chapters of Genesis to be fiction, yet fiction, historically told, should be consistent, whereas these two chapters are not. The Cain and Abel of Genesis appear to be no other than the ancient Egyptian story of Typhon and Osiris, the darkness and the light, which answered very well as an allegory without being believed as a fact.

OF THE TOWER OF BABEL.

THE story of the tower of Babel is told in the eleventh chapter of Genesis. It begins thus:—"And the whole earth (it was but a very little part of it they knew) was of one language and of one speech.—And it came to pass as they journeyed from the east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar, and they dwelt there.—And they said one to another, *Go to*, let us make brick and burn them thoroughly, and they had brick for stone, and slime had they for mortar.—And they said, *Go to*, let us build us a city, and a tower whose top may reach unto heaven, and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth.—And the Lord came down to see the city and the tower which the children of men builded.—And the Lord said, Behold the people is one, and they have all one language, and this they begin to do, and now nothing will be restrained from them which they have imagined to do.—*Go to*, let us go down, and there

confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech.—So (that is, by that means), the Lord scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth, and they left off building the city."

This is the story, and a very foolish inconsistent story it is. In the first place, the familiar and irreverend manner in which the Almighty is spoken of in this chapter, is offensive to a serious mind. As to the project of building a tower whose top should reach to heaven, there never could be a people so foolish as to have such a notion; but to represent the Almighty as jealous of the attempt, as the writer of the story has done, is adding profanation to folly. "*Go to*," say the builders, "let us build us a tower whose top shall reach to heaven." "*Go to*," says God, "let us go down and confound their language." This quaintness is indecent, and the reason given for it is worse, for, "now nothing will be restrained from them which they have imagined to do." This is representing the Almighty as jealous of their getting into heaven. The story is too ridiculous, even as a fable, to account for the diversity of languages in the world, for which it seems to have been intended.

As to the project of confounding their language for the purpose of making them separate, it is altogether inconsistent; because, instead of producing this effect, it would, by increasing their difficulties, render them more necessary to each other, and cause them to keep together. Where could they go to better themselves?

Another observation upon this story is, the inconsistency of it with respect to the opinion that the Bible is the word of God given for the information of mankind: for nothing could so effectually prevent such a word being known by mankind as confounding their language. The people who after this spoke different languages could no more understand such a word generally, than the builders of Babel could understand one another. It would have been necessary, therefore, had such word ever been given or intended to be given, that the whole earth should be, as they say it was at first, of one language and of one speech, and that it should never have been confounded.

The case however is, that the Bible will not bear examination in any part of it, which it would do if it was the word of

God. Those who most believe it are those who know least about it, and priests always take care to keep the inconsistent and contradictory parts out of sight. T. P.

Of the Religion of Deism compared with the Christian Religion, and the superiority of the former over the latter.

EVERY person, of whatever religious denomination he may be, is a DEIST in the first article of his Creed. Deism, from the Latin word *Deus*, God, is the belief of a God, and this belief is the first article of every man's creed.

It is on this article, universally consented to by all mankind, that the Deist builds his church, and here he rests. Whenever we step aside from this article, by mixing it with articles of human invention, we wander into a labyrinth of uncertainty and fable, and become exposed to every kind of imposition by pretenders to revelation. The Persian shows the *Zendavesta* of Zoroaster, the lawgiver of Persia, and calls it the divine law; the Bramin shows the *Shaster*, revealed, he says, by God to Brama, and given to him out of a cloud; the Jew shows what he calls the law of Moses, given, he says, by God, on the Mount Sinai; the Christian shows a collection of books and epistles written by nobody knows who, and called the New Testament; and the Mahometan shows the Koran, given, he says, by God to Mahomet: each of these calls itself *revealed religion*, and the *only* true word of God, and this the followers of each profess to believe from the habit of education, and each believes the others are imposed upon.

But when the divine gift of reason begins to expand itself in the mind and calls man to reflection, he then reads and contemplates God in his works, and not in books pretending to be revelations. The Creation is the Bible of the true believer in God. Everything in this vast volume inspires him with sublime ideas of the Creator. The little and paltry, and often obscene, tales of the Bible sink into wretchedness when put in comparison with this mighty work. The Deist needs none of

those tricks and shows called miracles to confirm his faith, for what can be a greater miracle than the Creation itself, and his own existence?

There is a happiness in Deism, when rightly understood, that is not to be found in any other system of religion. All other systems have something in them that either shock our reason, or are repugnant to it, and man, if he thinks at all, must stifle his reason in order to force himself to believe them. But in Deism our reason and our belief become happily united. The wonderful structure of the universe, and everything we behold in the system of the creation, prove to us, far better than books can do, the existence of a God, and at the same time proclaim His attributes. It is by the exercise of our reason that we are enabled to contemplate God in his works and imitate him in his ways. When we see his care and goodness extended over all his creatures, it teaches us our duty towards each other, while it calls forth our gratitude to him. It is by forgetting God in his works, and running after the books of pretended revelation that man has wandered from the straight path of duty and happiness, and become by turns the victim of doubt and the dupe of delusion.

Except in the first article in the Christian creed, that of believing in God, there is not an article in it but fills the mind with doubt as to the truth of it, the instant man begins to think. Now every article in a creed that is necessary to the happiness and salvation of man, ought to be as evident to the reason and comprehension of man as the first article is, for God has not given us reason for the purpose of confounding us, but that we should use it for our own happiness and his glory.

The truth of the first article is proved by God himself, and is universal; for *the creation is of itself demonstration of the existence of a Creator.* But the second article, that of God's begetting a son, is not proved in like manner, and stands on no other authority than that of a tale. Certain books in what is called the New Testament tell us that Joseph dreamed that an angel told him so, (Matthew, chap. i., v. 20): "And behold the angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee *Mary* thy wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the *Holy* Ghost." The evidence upon this article bears no comparison with the evidence upon the first article, and there-

fore is not entitled to the same credit, and ought not to be made an article in a creed, because the evidence of it is defective, and what evidence there is, is doubtful and suspicious. We do not believe the first article on the authority of books, whether called Bibles or Korans, nor yet on the visionary authority of dreams, but on the authority of God's own visible works in the creation. The nations who never heard of such books, nor of such people as Jews, Christians, or Mahometans, believe the existence of a God as fully as we do, because it is self-evident. The work of man's hands is a proof of the existence of man as fully as his personal appearance would be. When we see a watch, we have as positive evidence of the existence of a watchmaker, as if we saw him; and in like manner the creation is evidence to our reason and our senses of the existence of a Creator. But there is nothing in the works of God that is evidence that he begat a son, nor anything in the system of creation that corroborates such an idea, and therefore we are not authorized in believing it.

But presumption can assume anything, and therefore it makes Joseph's dream to be of equal authority with the existence of God, and to help it on calls it revelation. It is impossible for the mind of man in its serious moments, however it may have been entangled by education, or beset by priestcraft, not to stand still and doubt upon the truth of this article and of its creed. But this is not all.

The second article of the Christian creed having brought the son of Mary into the world, (and this Mary, according to the chronological tables, was a girl of only fifteen years of age when this son was born,) the next article goes on to account for his being begotten, which was, that when he grew a man he should be put to death, to expiate, they say, the sin that Adam brought into the world by eating an apple or some kind of forbidden fruit.

But though this is the creed of the church of Rome, from whence the Protestants borrowed it, it is a creed which that church has manufactured of itself, for it is not contained in, nor derived from, the book called the New Testament. The four books called the Evangelists, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, which give, or pretend to give, the birth, sayings, life, preaching, and death of Jesus Christ, make no mention of *what is called the* fall of man; nor is the name of Adam to

be found in any of those books, which it certainly would be, if the writers of them believed that Jesus was begotten, born, and died for the purpose of redeeming mankind from the sin which Adam had brought into the world. Jesus never speaks of Adam himself, of the garden of Eden, nor of what is called the fall of man.

But the church of Rome having set up its new religion which it called Christianity, and invented the creed which it named the apostles' creed, in which it calls Jesus the *only son of God, conceived by the Holy Ghost, and born of the Virgin Mary*, things of which it is impossible that man or woman can have any idea, and consequently no belief but in words; and for which there is no authority but the idle story of Joseph's dream in the first chapter of Matthew, which any designing impostor or foolish fanatic might make. It then manufactured the allegories in the book of Genesis into fact, and the allegorical tree of life and the tree of knowledge into real trees, contrary to the belief of the first Christians, and for which there is not the least authority in any of the books of the New Testament; for in none of them is there any mention made of such place as the Garden of Eden, nor of anything that is said to have happened there.

But the church of Rome could not erect the person called Jesus into a Saviour of the world without making the allegories in the book of Genesis into fact, though the New Testament, as before observed, gives no authority for it. All at once the allegorical tree of knowledge became, according to the church, a real tree, the fruit of it real fruit, and the eating of it sinful. As priestcraft was always the enemy of knowledge, because priestcraft supports itself by keeping people in delusion and ignorance, it was consistent with its policy to make the acquisition of knowledge a real sin.

The church of Rome having done this, it then brings forward Jesus the son of Mary as suffering death to redeem mankind from sin, which Adam, it says, had brought into the world by eating the fruit of the tree of knowledge. But as it is impossible for reason to believe such a story, because it can see no reason for it, nor have any evidence of it, the church then tells us we must not regard our reason, but must *believe*, as it were, and that through thick and thin, as if God had given man reason like a plaything, or a rattle, on purpose

to make fun of him. Reason is the forbidden tree of priestcraft, and may serve to explain the allegory of the forbidden tree of knowledge, for we may reasonably suppose the allegory had some meaning and application at the time it was invented. It was the practice of the eastern nations to convey their meaning by allegory, and relate it in the manner of fact. Jesus followed the same method, yet nobody ever supposed the allegory or parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus, the Prodigal Son, the Ten Virgins, &c., were facts. Why then should the tree of knowledge, which is far more romantic in idea than the parables in the New Testament are, be supposed to be a real tree?* The answer to this is, because the church could not make its new fangled system, which it called Christianity, hold together without it. To have made Christ to die on account of an allegorical tree would have been too barefaced a fable.

But the account, as it is given of Jesus in the New Testament, even visionary as it is, does not support the creed of the church that he died for the redemption of the world. According to that account he was crucified and buried on Friday, and rose again in good health on the Sunday morning, for we do not hear that he was sick. This cannot be called dying, and is rather making fun of death than suffering it. There are thousands of men and women also, who, if they could know they should come back again in good health in about thirty-six hours, would prefer such kind of death for the sake of the experiment, and to know what the other side of the grave was. Why then should that which would be only a voyage of curious amusement to us be magnified into merit and sufferings in him? If a God he could not suffer death, for immortality cannot die, and as a man his death could be no more than the death of any other person.

The belief of the redemption of Jesus Christ is altogether an invention of the church of Rome, not the doctrine of the New Testament. What the writers of the New Testament attempt to prove by the story of Jesus is, the *resurrection of*

* The remark of the Emperor Julian on the story of the Tree of Knowledge is worth observing. "If," said he, "there ever had been, or could be, a Tree of Knowledge, instead of God forbidding man to eat thereof, it would be that of which he would order him to eat the most."

the same body from the grave, which was the belief of the Pharisees, in opposition to the Sadducees (a sect of Jews), who denied it. Paul, who was brought up a Pharisee, labours hard at this point, for it was the creed of his own Pharisaical church. The XV chap., 1st of Corinthians is full of supposed cases and assertions about the resurrection of the same body, but there is not a word in it about redemption. This chapter makes part of the funeral service of the Episcopal church. The dogma of the redemption is the fable of priestcraft invented since the time the New Testament was compiled, and the agreeable delusion of it suited with the depravity of immoral livers. When men are taught to ascribe all their crimes and vices to the temptations of the Devil, and to believe that Jesus, by his death, rubs all off and pays their passage to heaven gratis, they become as careless in morals as a spendthrift would be of money, were he told that his father had engaged to pay off all his scores. It is a doctrine, not only dangerous to morals in this world, but to our happiness in the next world, because it holds out such a cheap, easy, and lazy way of getting to heaven as has a tendency to induce men to hug the delusion of it to their own injury.

But there are times when men have serious thoughts, and it is at such times when they begin to think, that they begin to doubt the truth of the Christian religion, and well they may, for it is too fanciful and too full of conjecture, inconsistency, improbability, and irrationality, to afford consolation to the thoughtful man. His reason revolts against his creed. He sees that none of its articles are proved or can be proved. He may believe that such a person as is called Jesus (for Christ was not his name) was born and grew to be a man, because it is no more than a natural and probable case. But who is to prove he is the son of God, that he was begotten by the Holy Ghost? Of these things there can be no proof; and that which admits not of proof, and is against the laws of probability, and the order of nature, which God himself has established, is not an object for belief. God has not given man reason to embarrass him, but to prevent his being imposed upon.

He may believe that Jesus was crucified, because many *others* were crucified, but who is to prove he was crucified *for the sins of the world*? This article has no evidence, not even *in the New* Testament; and if it had, where is the proof that

the New Testament, in relating things neither probable nor proveable, is to be believed as true? When an article in a creed does not admit of proof nor of probability, the salvo is to call it revelation: But this is only putting one difficulty in the place of another, for it is as impossible to prove a thing to be revelation as it is to prove that Mary was gotten with child by the Holy Ghost.

Here it is that the religion of Deism is superior to the Christian religion. It is free from all those invented and torturing articles that shock our reason or injure our humanity, and with which the Christian religion abounds. Its creed is pure and sublimely simple. It believes in God, and there it rests. It honours reason as the choicest gift of God to man, and the faculty by which he is enabled to contemplate the power, wisdom, and goodness of the Creator displayed in the creation; and reposing itself on his protection, both here and hereafter, it avoids all presumptuous beliefs, and rejects, as the fabulous inventions of men, all books pretending to revelation.

T. P.

TO THE MEMBERS OF THE SOCIETY, STYLING ITSELF THE MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

The New York Gazette of the 16*th* (*August*) *contains the following article*—"*On Tuesday, a Committee of the Missionary Society, consisting chiefly of distinguished Clergymen, had an interview at the City Hotel, with the Chiefs of the Osage tribe of Indians, now in this City* (*New York*), *to whom they presented a* Bible, *together with an Address, the object of which was, to inform them that this* good book *contained the* will and laws *of the* GREAT SPIRIT."

It is to be hoped some humane person will, on account of our people on the frontiers, as well as of the Indians, undeceive them with respect to the present the Missionaries have made them, and which they call a *good book*, containing, they say, *the will and laws of the* GREAT SPIRIT. Can those

Missionaries suppose that the assassination of men, women, and children, and sucking infants, related in the books ascribed to Moses, Joshua, &c., and blasphemously said to be done by the command of the Lord, the Great Spirit, can be edifying to our Indian neighbours, or advantageous to us? Is not the Bible warfare the same kind of warfare as the Indians themselves carry on, that of indiscriminate destruction, and against which humanity shudders; can the horrid examples and vulgar obscenity, with which the Bible abounds, improve the morals, or civilize the manners of the Indians? Will they learn sobriety and decency from drunken Noah and beastly Lot; or will their daughters be edified by the example of Lot's daughters? Will the prisoners they take in war be treated the better by their knowing the horrid story of Samuel's hewing Agag in pieces like a block of wood, or David's putting them under harrows of iron? Will not the shocking accounts of the destruction of the Canaanites when the Israelites invaded their country, suggest the idea that we may serve them in the same manner, or the accounts stir them up to do the like to our people on the frontiers, and then justify the assassination by the Bible the Missionaries have given them? Will those Missionary Societies never leave off doing mischief?

In the account which this missionary Committee gave of their interview, they make the Chief of the Indians to say, that, "as neither he nor his people could read it, he begged that some good white man might be sent to instruct them."

It is necessary the General Government keep a strict eye over those Missionary Societies, who under the pretence of instructing the Indians, send spies into their country to find out the best lands. No society should be permitted to have intercourse with the Indian tribes, nor send any person among them, but with the knowledge and consent of the Government. The present administration has brought the Indians into a good disposition, and is improving them in the moral and civil comforts of life; but if these self-created societies be suffered to interfere, and send their speculating Missionaries among them, the laudable object of Government will be defeated. Priests, we know, are not remarkable for doing *anything* gratis; they have, in general, some scheme in every-

thing they do, either to impose on the ignorant or derange the operations of Government.

A FRIEND TO THE INDIANS.

OF THE SABBATH DAY OF CONNECTICUT.

THE word Sabbath means REST, that is, cessation from labour; but the stupid Blue Laws* of Connecticut make a labour of rest, for they oblige a person to sit still from sunrise to sunset on a Sabbath day, which is hard work. Fanaticism made those laws, and hypocrisy pretends to reverence them, for where such laws prevail hypocrisy will prevail also.

One of those laws says, "No person shall run on a Sabbath day, nor walk in his garden, nor elsewhere, but reverently to and from meeting." These fanatical hypocrites forget that God dwells not in temples made with hands, and that the earth is full of his glory. One of the finest scenes and subjects of religious contemplation is to walk into the woods and fields, and survey the works of the God of the Creation. The wide expanse of heaven, the earth covered with verdure, the lofty forest, the waving corn, the magnificent roll of mighty rivers, and the murmuring melody of the cheerful brooks, are scenes that inspire the mind with gratitude and delight; but this the gloomy Calvinist of Connecticut must not behold on a Sabbath day. Entombed within the walls of his dwelling, he shuts from his view the temple of creation. The sun shines no joy to him. The gladdening voice of nature calls on him in vain. He is deaf, dumb, and blind to everything around him that God has made. Such is the Sabbath day of Connecticut.

From whence could come this miserable notion of devotion? It comes from the gloominess of the Calvinistic creed. If men love darkness rather than light, because their works are evil, the ulcerated mind of a Calvinist, who sees God only in terror,

* They were called Blue Laws because they were originally printed on blue paper.

and sits brooding over the scenes of hell and damnation, can have no joy in beholding the glories of the creation. Nothing in that mighty and wondrous system accords with his principles or his devotion. He sees nothing there that tells him that God created millions on purpose to be damned, and that children of a span long are born to burn for ever in hell. The creation preaches a different doctrine to this. We there see that the care and goodness of God is extended impartially over all the creatures he has made. The worm of the earth shares his protection equally with the elephant of the desert. The grass that springs beneath our feet grows by his bounty as well as the cedars of Lebanon. Everything in the creation reproaches the Calvinist with unjust ideas of God, and disowns the hardness and ingratitude of his principles. Therefore he shuns the sight of them on a Sabbath day.

AN ENEMY TO CANT AND IMPOSITION.

OF THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENT.

ARCHBISHOP TILLOTSON says, "The difference between the style of the Old and New Testament is so very remarkable, that one of the greatest sects in the primitive times, did, upon this very ground, found their heresy of two Gods, the one evil, fierce, and cruel, whom they called the God of the Old Testament; the other, good, kind, and merciful, whom they called the God of the New Testament; so great a difference is there between the representations that are given of God in the books of the Jewish and Christian Religion, as to give, at least, some colour and pretence to an imagination of two Gods." Thus far Tillotson.

But the case was, that as the Church had picked out several passages from the Old Testament, which she most absurdly and falsely calls prophecies of Jesus Christ, (whereas there is no prophecy of any such person, as any one may see by examining the passages and the cases to which they apply,) she was under the necessity of keeping up the credit of the Old Testament, because if that fell the other would soon follow, and the

Christian system of faith would soon be at an end. As a book of morals, there are several parts of the New Testament that are good; but they are no other than what had been preached in the Eastern world several hundred years before Christ was born. Confucius, the Chinese philosopher, who lived five hundred years before the time of Christ, says, *acknowledge thy benefits by the return of benefits, but never revenge injuries.*

The clergy in Popish countries were cunning enough to know, that if the Old Testament was made public, the fallacy of the New, with respect to Christ, would be detected, and they prohibited the use of it, and always took it away wherever they found it. The Deists, on the contrary, always encouraged the reading it, that people might see and judge for themselves, that a Book so full of contradictions and wickedness, could not be the word of God, and that we dishonour God by ascribing it to him.

A True Deist.

Hints towards forming a Society for inquiring into the truth or falsehood of ancient History, so far as History is connected with systems of religion, ancient and modern.

It has been customary to class history into three divisions, distinguished by the names of Sacred, Profane, and Ecclesiastical. By the first is meant the Bible; by the second, the history of nations, of men and things; and by the third, the history of the church and its priesthood.

Nothing is more easy than to give names, and therefore mere names signify nothing unless they lead to the discovery of some cause for which that name was given. For example, *Sunday* is the name given to the first day of the week, in the English language, and it is the same in the Latin, that is, it has the same meaning, (*Dies Solis*) and also in the German, and in several other languages. Why then was this name given to that day? Because it was the day dedicated

by the ancient world to the luminary, which in English we call the Sun, and therefore the day *Sun-day*, or the day of the Sun; as in the like manner we call the second day Monday, the day dedicated to the Moon.

Here the name, *Sunday*, leads to the cause of its being called so, and we have visible evidence of the fact, because we behold the Sun from whence the name comes; but this is not the case when we distinguish one part of history from another by the name of *Sacred*. All histories have been written by men. We have no evidence, nor any cause to believe, that any have been written by God. That part of the Bible called the Old Testament, is the history of the Jewish nation, from the time of Abraham, which begins in the 11th chap. of Genesis, to the downfall of that nation by Nebuchadnezzar, and is no more entitled to be called sacred than any other history. It is altogether the contrivance of priestcraft that has given it that name. So far from its being *sacred*, it has not the appearance of being true in many of the things it relates. It must be better authority than a book, which any impostor might make, as Mahomet made the Koran, to make a thoughtful man believe that the sun and moon stood still, or that Moses and Aaron turned the Nile, which is larger than the Delaware, into blood, and that the Egyptian magicians did the same. These things have too much the appearance of romance to be believed for fact.

It would be of use to inquire, and ascertain the time, when that part of the Bible called the Old Testament first appeared. From all that can be collected there was no such book till after the Jews returned from captivity in Babylon, and that it is the work of the Pharisees of the Second Temple. How they came to make the 19th chapter of the 2d book of Kings, and the 37th of Isaiah, word for word alike, can only be accounted for by their having no plan to go by, and not knowing what they were about. The same is the case with respect to the last verses in the 2d book of Chronicles, and the first verses in Ezra, they also are word for word alike, which shows that the Bible has been put together at random.

But besides these things, there is great reason to believe we *have been* imposed upon, with respect to the antiquity of the *Bible*, and especially with respect to the books ascribed to *Moses*. Herodotus, who is called the father of history, and

is the most ancient historian whose works have reached to our time, and who travelled into Egypt, conversed with the priests, historians, astronomers, and learned men of that country, for the purpose of obtaining all the information of it he could, and who gives an account of the ancient state of it, makes no mention of such a man as Moses, though the Bible makes him to have been the greatest hero there, nor of any one circumstance mentioned in the book of Exodus, respecting Egypt, such as turning the rivers into blood, the dust into lice, the death of the first born throughout all the land of Egypt, the passage of the Red-sea, the drowning of Pharaoh, and all his host, things which could not have been a secret in Egypt, and must have been generally known, had they been facts; and therefore as no such things were known in Egypt, nor any such man as Moses, at the time Herodotus was there, which is about two thousand two hundred years ago, it shows that the account of these things in the book ascribed to Moses is a made story of later times, that is, after the return of the Jews from the Babylonian captivity, and that Moses is not the author of the books ascribed to him.

With respect to the cosmogony, or account of the creation in the first chapter of Genesis, of the Garden of Eden in the second chapter, and of what is called the fall of man in the third chapter, there is something concerning them we are not historically acquainted with. In none of the books of the Bible after Genesis, are any of these things mentioned, or even alluded to. How is this to be accounted for? The obvious inference is, that either they were not known, or not believed to be facts, by the writers of the other books of the Bible, and that Moses is not the author of the chapters where these accounts are given.

The next question on the case is, how did the Jews come by these notions, and at what time were they written?

To answer this question we must first consider what the state of the world was at the time the Jews began to be a people, for the Jews are but a modern race, compared with the antiquity of other nations. At the time there were, even by their own account, but thirteen Jews or Israelites in the world, *Jacob and his twelve sons*, and four of these were bastards. The nations of Egypt, Chaldea, Persia, and India were *great and* populous, abounding in learning and scien-

particularly in the knowledge of astronomy, of which the Jews were always ignorant. The chronological tables mention that eclipses were observed at Babylon above two thousand years before the Christian era, which was before there was a single Jew or Israelite in the world.

All those ancient nations had their cosmogonies, that is, their accounts how the creation was made, long before there were such people as Jews or Israelites. An account of these cosmogonies of India and Persia is given by Henry Lord, Chaplain to the East India Company, at Surat, and published in London in 1630. The writer of this has seen a copy of the edition of 1630, and made extracts from it. The work, which is now scarce, was dedicated by Lord to the Archbishop of Canterbury.

We know that the Jews were carried captives into Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar, and remained in captivity several years, when they were liberated by Cyrus, King of Persia. During their captivity they would have had an opportunity of acquiring some knowledge of the cosmogony of the Persians, or at least of getting some ideas how to fabricate one to put at the head of their own history after their return from captivity. This will account for the cause, for some cause there must have been, that no mention nor reference is made to the cosmogony in Genesis in any of the books of the Bible, supposed to have been written before the captivity, nor is the name of Adam to be found in any of those books.

The books of Chronicles were written after the return of the Jews from captivity, for the third chapter of the first book gives a list of all the Jewish kings, from David to Zedekiah, who was carried captive into Babylon, and to four generations beyond the time of Zedekiah. In the first verse of the first chapter of this book the name of Adam is mentioned, but not in any book in the Bible, written before that time, nor could it be, for Adam and Eve are names taken from the cosmogony of the Persians. Henry Lord, in his book, written from Surat, and dedicated, as I have already said, to the Archbishop of Canterbury, says that in the Persian cosmogony the name of the first man was *Adamoh*, and of the woman *Hevah*.*

*In an English edition of the Bible, in 1583, the first woman is called Hevah.—Editor of the Prospect.

From hence comes the Adam and Eve of the book of Genesis. In the cosmogony of India, of which I shall speak in a future number, the name of the first man was *Pourous*, and of the woman *Parcoutee*. We want a knowledge of the Sanscrit language of India to understand the meaning of the names, and I mentioned it in this place only to show that it is from the cosmogony of Persia rather than that of India, that the cosmogony in Genesis has been fabricated by the Jews, who returned from captivity by the liberality of Cyrus, King of Persia. There is, however, reason to conclude, on the authority of Sir William Jones, who resided several years in India, that these names were very expressive in the language to which they belonged, for, in speaking of this language, he says (see the Asiatic Researches), "The Sanscrit language, whatever be its antiquity, is of wonderful structure; it is more perfect than the Greek, more copious than the Latin, and more exquisitely refined than either."

These hints, which are intended to be continued, will serve to show that a society for inquiring into the ancient state of the world, and the state of ancient history, so far as history is connected with systems of religion, ancient and modern, may become a useful and instructive institution. There is good reason to believe we have been in great error with respect to the antiquity of the Bible, as well as imposed upon by its contents. Truth ought to be the object of every man; for without truth there can be no real happiness to a thoughtful mind, or any assurance of happiness hereafter. It is the duty of man to obtain all the knowledge he can, and then make the best use of it.

T. P.

TO MR. MOORE, OF NEW YORK,

COMMONLY CALLED

BISHOP MOORE.

I HAVE read in the newspapers your account of the visit you made to the unfortunate General Hamilton, and of administering to him a ceremony of your church, which you call *the holy communion*.

I regret the fate of General Hamilton, and I so far hope with you that it will be a warning to thoughtless man not to sport away the life that God has given him; but with respect to other parts of your letter I think it very reprehensible, and betrays great ignorance of what true religion is. But you are a priest, you get your living by it, and it is not your worldly interest to undeceive yourself.

After giving an account of your administering to the deceased what you call the Holy Communion, you add, "By reflecting on this melancholy event, let the humble believer be encouraged ever to hold fast that precious faith which is the *only source of true consolation* in the last extremity of nature. Let the infidel be persuaded to abandon his opposition to the Gospel."

To show you, sir, that your promise of consolation from scripture has no foundation to stand upon, I will cite to you one of the greatest falsehoods upon record, and which was given, as the record says, for the purpose, and as a promise of consolation.

In the epistle called "the First Epistle of Paul to the Thessalonians," (chap. 4) the writer consoles the Thessalonians as to the case of their friends who were already dead. He does this by informing them, and he does it he says, by the word of the Lord (a most notorious falsehood), that the general resurrection of the dead, and the ascension of the living, will be in his and their days; that their friends will then come to life again; that the dead in Christ will rise first.—"Then WE, (says he, v. 17) which *are alive, and remain*, shall be *caught up* together with THEM *in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air*, and so shall we ever be with the Lord—wherefore *comfort* one another with these words."

Delusion and falsehood cannot be carried higher than they are in this passage. You, sir, are but a novice in the art. The words admit of no equivocation. The whole passage is in the first person and the present tense, "*We* which *are alive*." Had the writer meant a future time, and a distant generation, it must have been in the third person and the future tense, "*They* who *shall then* be alive." I am thus particular for the purpose of nailing you down to the text, that you may *not* ramble from it, nor put other constructions upon the words than they will bear, which priests are very apt to do.

Now, sir, it is impossible for a serious man, to whom God has given the divine gift of reason, and who employs that reason to reverence and adore the God that gave it, it is, I say, impossible for such a man to put confidence in a book that abounds with fable and falsehood, as the New Testament does. This passage is but a sample of what I could give you.

You call on those whom you style "*infidels*," (and they in return might call you an idolater, a worshipper of false gods, a preacher of false doctrine) "to abandon their opposition to the Gospel." Prove, sir, the Gospel to be true, and the opposition will cease of itself; but until you do this (which we know you cannot do), you have no right to expect they will notice your call. If by *infidels* you mean *Deists* (and you must be exceedingly ignorant of the origin of the word Deist, and know but little of *Deus*, to put that construction upon it), you will find yourself over-matched if you begin to engage in a controversy with them. Priests may dispute with priests, and sectaries with sectaries, about the meaning of what they *agree* to call scripture, and end as they began; but when you engage with a Deist you must keep to fact. Now, sir, you cannot prove a single article of your religion to be true, and we tell you so publicly. Do it, *if you can*. The Deistical article, *the belief of a God*, with which your creed begins, has been borrowed by your church from the ancient Deists, and even this article you dishonour by putting a *dream-begotten* phantom,* which you call his son, over his head, and treating God as if he was superannuated. Deism is the only profession of religion that admits of worshipping and reverencing God in purity, and the only one on which the thoughtful mind can repose with undisturbed tranquillity. God is almost forgotten in the Christian religion. Everything, even the creation, is ascribed to the son of Mary.

In religion, as in everything else, perfection consists in simplicity. The Christian religion of Gods within Gods, like

* The first chapter of Matthew relates that Joseph, the betrothed husband of Mary, dreamed that an angel told him that his intended bride was with child by the Holy Ghost. It is not every husband, whether carpenter or priest, that can be so easily satisfied, for lo! it was a dream. Whether Mary was in a dream when this was done we are not told. It is, however, a comical story. There is no man living *can understand* it.

wheels within wheels, is like a complicated machine, that never goes right, and every projector in the art of Christianity is trying to mend it. It is its defects that have caused such a number and variety of tinkers to be hammering at it, and still it goes wrong. In the visible world no time-keeper can go equally true with the sun; and in like manner, no complicated religion can be equally true with the pure and unmixed religion of Deism.

Had you not offensively glanced at a description of men whom you call by a false name, you would not have been troubled nor honoured with this address; neither has the writer of it any desire or intention to enter into controversy with you. He thinks the temporal establishment of your church politically unjust and offensively unfair; but with respect to religion itself, distinct from temporal establishments, he is happy in the enjoyment of his own, and he leaves you to make the best you can of yours.

A MEMBER OF THE DEISTICAL CHURCH.

TO JOHN MASON,

One of the Ministers of the Scotch Presbyterian Church, of New York, with Remarks on his account of the visit he made to the late General Hamilton.

"*Come now, let us* REASON *together, saith the Lord.*" This is one of the passages you quoted from your Bible, in your conversation with General Hamilton, as given in your letter signed with your name, and published in the Commercial Advertiser, and other New York papers, and I re-quote the passage to show that your *Text* and your *Religion* contradict each other.

It is impossible to reason upon things *not comprehensible by reason*; and therefore, if you keep to your text, which priests seldom do (for they are generally either above it, or below it, *or forget* it), you must admit a religion to which reason can *apply*, and this, certainly, is not the Christian religion.

There is not an article in the Christian religion that is cognisable by reason. The Deistical article of your religion, *the belief of a God*, is no more a Christian article than it is a Mahometan article. It is an universal article, common to all religions, and which is held in greater purity by Turks than by Christians; but the Deistical church is the only one which holds it in real purity; because that church acknowledges no co-partnership with God. It believes in him solely, and knows nothing of Sons, married Virgins, nor Ghosts. It holds all these things to be the fables of priestcraft.

Why then do you talk of reason, or refer to it, since your religion has nothing to do with reason, nor reason with that? You tell people, as you told Hamilton, that they must have *faith!* Faith in what? You ought to know that before the mind can have faith in anything, it must either know it as a fact, or see cause to believe it on the probability of that kind of evidence that is cognisable by reason: but your religion is not within either of these cases; for, in the first place, you cannot prove it to be fact; and in the second place, you cannot support it by reason, not only because it is not cognisable by reason, but because it is contrary to reason. What reason can there be in supposing, or believing, that God put *himself to death, to satisfy himself, and be revenged on the Devil on account of Adam;* for tell the story which way you will, it comes to this at last.

As you can make no appeal to reason in support of an unreasonable religion, you then (and others of your profession) bring yourselves off by telling people, they must not believe in reason, but in *revelation*. This is the artifice of habit without reflection. It is putting *words* in the place of *things;* for do you not see, that when you tell people to believe in revelation you must first prove that what you *call* revelation, *is* revelation; and as you cannot do this, you put the *word* which is easily spoken, in the place of the *thing* you cannot prove. You have no more evidence that your Gospel is revelation, than the Turks have that their Koran is revelation, and the only difference between them and you is, that they preach their delusion and you preach yours.

In your conversation with General Hamilton, you say to him, "The *simple truths* of the Gospel, which require no

abstruse investigation, but faith in the veracity of *God, who cannot lie*, are best suited to your present condition."

If those matters you call "*simple truths*," are what you call them, and require no abstruse investigation, they would be so obvious that reason would easily comprehend them; yet the doctrine you preach at other times is, *that the mysteries of the Gospel are beyond the reach of reason*. If your first position be true, that they are *simple truths*, priests are unnecessary, for we do not want preachers to tell us the sun shines; and if your second be true, the case, as to effect, is the same, for it is waste of money to pay a man to explain unexplainable things, and loss of time to listen to him. That *God cannot lie*, is no advantage to your argument, because it is no proof that priests cannot, or that the Bible does not. Did not Paul lie when he told the Thessalonians that the general resurrection of the dead would be in his lifetime, and that he should go up alive along with them into the clouds to meet the Lord in the air? 1 Thes. chap. 4, v. 17.

You spoke of what you call "*the precious blood of Christ.*" This savage style of language belongs to the priests of the Christian religion. The professors of this religion say they are shocked at the accounts of human sacrifices of which they read in the histories of some countries. Do they not see that their own religion is founded on a human sacrifice, the blood of man, of which their priests talk like so many butchers? It is no wonder the Christian religion has been so bloody in its effects, for it began in blood, and many thousands of human sacrifices have since been offered on the altar of the Christian religion.

It is necessary to the character of a religion, as being true, and immutable as God himself is, that the evidence of it be equally the same through all periods of time and circumstance. This is not the case with the Christian religion, nor with that of the Jews that preceded it (for there was a time, and that within the knowledge of history, when these religions did not exist), nor is it the case with any religion we know of but the religion of Deism. In this the evidences are eternal and universal.—"*The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handy work,—Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge.*"* But all

*This Psalm (19) which is a Deistical Psalm, is so much in the

other religions are made to arise from some local circumstance, and are introduced by some temporary trifle which its partisans call a miracle, but of which there is no proof but the story of it.

The Jewish religion, according to the history of it, began in a *wilderness*, and the Christian religion in a *stable*. The Jewish books tell us of wonders exhibited upon Mount Sinai. It happened that nobody lived there to contradict the account. The Christian books tell us of a star that hung over the *stable* at the birth of Jesus. There is no star there now, nor any person living that saw it. But all the stars in the heavens bear eternal evidence to the truth of Deism. It did not begin in a stable, nor in a wilderness. It began everywhere. The theatre of the universe is the place of its birth.

As adoration paid to any being but GOD himself is idolatry, the Christian religion by paying adoration to a man, born of a woman, called Mary, belongs to the idolatrous class of religions, consequently the consolation drawn from it is delusion. Between you and your rival in communion ceremonies, Dr. Moore of the Episcopal church, you have, in order to make yourselves appear of some importance, reduced General Hamilton's character to that of a feeble-minded man, who, in going out of the world, wanted a passport from a priest. Which of you was first or last applied to for this purpose is a matter of no consequence.

The man, sir, who puts his trust and confidence in God, that leads a just and moral life, and endeavours to do good, does not trouble himself about priests when his hour of departure comes, nor permit priests to trouble themselves about him. They are, in general, mischievous beings, where cha-

manner of some parts of the book of Job, (which is not a book of the Jews, and does not belong to the Bible,) that it has the appearance of having been translated into Hebrew from the same language in which the book of Job was originally written, and brought by the Jews from Chaldea or Persia, when they returned from captivity. The contemplation of the heavens made a great part of the religious devotion of the Chaldeans and Persians, and their religious festivals were regulated by the progress of the sun through the twelve signs of the Zodiac. But the Jews knew nothing about the Heavens, or they would not have told the foolish story of the sun's standing still upon a hill, and the moon in a valley. What could they want the moon for in *the day time?*

racter is concerned; a consultation of priests is worse than a consultation of physicians.

A MEMBER OF THE DEISTICAL CONGREGATION.

ON DEISM AND THE WRITINGS OF THOMAS PAINE.

THE following reflections, written last winter, were occasioned by *certain* expressions in some of the public papers against Deism, and the Writings of Thomas Paine on that subject.

"*Great is Diana of the Ephesians*," was the cry of the people of Ephesus;* and the cry of "*our holy religion*," has been the cry of superstition in some instances, and of hypocrisy in others, from that day to this.

The Brahmin, the follower of Zoroaster, the Jew, the Mahometan, the church of Rome, the Greek church, the protestant church, split into several hundred contradictory sectaries, preaching, in some instances, damnation against each other, all cry out, "*our holy religion*." The Calvinist, who damns children of a span long to hell to burn for ever for the glory of God (and this is called Christianity), and the universalist, who preaches that all shall be saved and none shall be damned (and this also is called Christianity), boast alike of their *holy religion* and their Christian faith. Something more, therefore, is necessary than mere *cry* and wholesale assertion, and that something is TRUTH; and as inquiry is the road to truth, he that is opposed to inquiry is not a friend to truth.

The God of Truth is not the God of fable; when, therefore, any book is introduced into the world as the word of God, and made a ground-work for religion, it ought to be scrutinized more than other books to see if it bear evidence of being what it is called. Our reverence to God demands that we do this, lest we ascribe to God what is not his, and our duty to ourselves demands it lest we take fable for fact, and rest our hope of salvation on a false foundation. It is not our calling a *book holy* that makes it so, any more than our calling a *religion holy* that entitles it to the name. Inquiry, therefore, is

* Acts, chap. xix. ver. 28.

necessary in order to arrive at truth. But inquiry must have some principle to proceed on, some standard to judge by, superior to human authority.

When we survey the works of creation, the revolutions of the planetary system, and the whole economy of what is called nature, which is no other than the laws the Creator has prescribed to matter, we see unerring order and universal harmony reigning throughout the whole. No one part contradicts another. The sun does not run against the moon, nor the moon against the sun, nor the planets against each other. Everything keeps its appointed time and place. This harmony in the works of God is so obvious, that the farmer of the field, though he cannot calculate eclipses, is as sensible of it as the philosophical astronomer. He sees the God of order in every part of the visible universe.

Here, then, is the standard to which everything must be brought that pretends to be the work or word of God, and by this standard it must be judged, independently of anything and everything that man can say or do. His opinion is like a feather in the scale compared with the standard that God himself has set up.

It is, therefore, by this standard, that the Bible, and all other books pretending to be the word of God (and there are many of them in the world), must be judged, and not by the opinions of men, or the decrees of ecclesiastical councils. These have been so contradictory, that they have often rejected in one council what they had voted to be the word of God in another; and admitted what had been before rejected. In this state of uncertainty in which we are, and which is rendered still more uncertain by the numerous contradictory sectaries that have sprung up since the time of Luther and Calvin, what is man to do? The answer is easy. Begin at the root—begin with the Bible itself. Examine it with the utmost strictness. It is our duty so to do. Compare the parts with each other, and the whole with the harmonious, magnificent order that reigns throughout the visible universe, and the result will be, that if the same almighty wisdom that created the universe, dictated also the Bible, the Bible will be as harmonious and as magnificent in all its parts, and in the whole, as the universe is. But if, instead of this, the parts are *found to be* discordant, contradicting in one place what is

said in another (as in 2 Sam. chap. xxiv. ver. 1, and 1 Chron. chap. xxi. ver. 1, where the same action is ascribed to God in one book and to Satan in the other), abounding also in idle and obscene stories, and representing the Almighty as a passionate, whimsical Being, continually changing his mind, making and unmaking his own works as if he did not know what he was about, we may take it for certainty that the Creator of the universe is not the author of such a book, that it is not the word of God, and that to call it so is to dishonour his name. The Quakers, who are a people more moral and regular in their conduct than the people of other sectaries, and generally allowed so to be, do not hold the Bible to be the word of God. They call it *a history of the times*, and a bad history it is, and also a history of bad men and of bad actions, and abounding with bad examples.

For several centuries past the dispute has been about doctrines. It is now about fact. Is the Bible the word of God, or is it not? for until this point is established, no doctrine drawn from the Bible can afford real consolation to man, and he ought to be careful he does not mistake delusion for truth. This is a case that concerns all men alike.

There has always existed in Europe, and also in America, since its establishments, a numerous description of men (I do not here mean the Quakers), who did not, and do not believe the Bible to be the word of God. These men never formed themselves into an established society, but are to be found in all the sectaries that exist, and are more numerous than any, perhaps equal to all, and are daily increasing. From *Deus*, the Latin word for God, they have been denominated *Deists*, that is, believers in God. It is the most honourable appellation that can be given to man, because it is derived immediately from the Deity. It is not an artificial name like episcopalian, presbyterian, &c., but is a name of sacred signification, and to revile it, is to revile the name of God.

Since then there is so much doubt and uncertainty about the Bible, some asserting, and others denying it to be the word of God, it is best that the whole matter come out. It is necessary, for the information of the world, that it should. *A better* time cannot offer than whilst the government, *patronizing* no one sect or opinion in preference to another, *protects* equally the rights of all; and certainly every man

must spurn the idea of an ecclesiastical tyranny, engrossing the rights of the press, and holding it free only for itself.

Whilst the terrors of the Church, and the tyranny of the State, hung like a pointed sword over Europe, men were commanded to believe what the Church told them, or go to the stake. All inquiries into the authenticity of the Bible were shut out by the inquisition. We ought, therefore, to suspect that a great mass of information respecting the Bible, and the introduction of it into the world, has been suppressed by the united tyranny of Church and State, for the purpose of keeping people in ignorance, and which ought to be known.

The Bible has been received by the protestants on the authority of the Church of Rome, and on no other authority. It is she that has said it is the word of God. We do not admit the authority of that church with respect to its pretended *infallibility*, its manufactured miracles, its setting itself up to forgive sins, its amphibious doctrine of transubstantiation, &c.; and we ought to be watchful with respect to any book introduced by her, or her ecclesiastical councils, and called by her the word of God; and the more so, because it was by propagating that belief and supporting it by fire and faggot, that she kept up her temporal power. That the belief of the Bible does no good in the world, may be seen by the irregular lives of those, as well priests as laymen, who profess to believe it to be the word of God, and the moral lives of the Quakers, who do not. It abounds with too many ill examples to be made a rule for moral life, and were a man to copy after the lives of some of its most celebrated characters, he would come to the gallows.

Thomas Paine has written to show that the Bible is not the word of God, that the books it contains were not written by the persons to whom they are ascribed, that it is an anonymous book, and that we have no authority for calling it the word of God, or for saying it was written by inspired penmen, since we do not know who the writers were. This is the opinion, not only of Thomas Paine, but of thousands and tens of thousands of the most respectable characters in the United States and in Europe. These men have the same right to their opinions as others have to contrary opinions, and the same right to publish them. Ecclesiastical tyranny is not admissible in the United States.

With respect to morality, the writings of Thomas Paine are remarkable for purity and benevolence; and though he often enlivens them with touches of wit and humour, he never loses sight of the real solemnity of his subject. No man's morals, either with respect to his Maker, himself, or his neighbour, can suffer by the writings of Thomas Paine.

It is now too late to abuse Deism, especially in a country where the press is free, *or where free presses can be established.* It is a religion that has God for its patron, and derives its name from him. The thoughtful mind of man, wearied with the endless contentions of sectaries against sectaries, doctrines against doctrines, and priests against priests, finds its repose at last in the contemplative belief and worship of one God and the practice of morality, for as Pope wisely says,

"He can't be wrong, whose life is in the right."

OF THE BOOKS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

Addressed to the Believers in the book called the Scriptures.

THE New Testament contains twenty-seven books, of which four are called Gospels; one called the Acts of the Apostles; fourteen called Epistles of Paul; one of James; two of Peter; three of John; one of Jude; and one called the Revelation.

None of those books have the appearance of being written by the persons whose names they bear, neither do we know who the authors were. They come to us on no other authority than the church of Rome, which the Protestant priests, especially those of New England, called the *whore of Babylon.* This church appointed sundry councils to be held, to compose creeds for the people, and to regulate church affairs. Two of the principal of these councils were that of Nice and of Laodicea (names of the places where the councils were held), about three hundred and fifty years after the time that Jesus is said to have lived. Before this time there was no such book as the New Testament. But the church could not well go on without having something to show, as the Persians showed the

Zendavesta, revealed, they say, by God to Zoroaster; the Bramins of India, the Shaster, revealed, they say, by God to Brama, and given to him out of a dusky cloud; the Jews, the books they call the Law of Moses, given they say also out of a cloud on Mount Sinai; the church set about forming a code for itself out of such materials as it could find or pick up. But where they got those materials, in what language they were written, or whose handwriting they were, or whether they were originals or copies, or on what authority they stood, we know nothing of, nor does the New Testament tell us. The church was resolved to have a New Testament, and, as after the lapse of more than three hundred years, no handwriting could be proved or disproved, the church, who, like former impostors, had then gotten possession of the state, had everything its own way. It invented creeds, such as that called the Apostle's Creed, the Nicean Creed, the Athanasian Creed, and out of the loads of rubbish that were presented, it voted four to be Gospels, and others to be Epistles, as we now find them arranged.

Of those called Gospels above forty were presented, each pretending to be genuine. Four only were voted in, and entitled the Gospel *according* to St. Matthew; the Gospel *according* to St. Mark; the Gospel *according* to St. Luke; the Gospel *according* to St. John.

This word,—*according*,—shows that those books have not been written by Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, but according to some accounts or traditions, picked up concerning them. The word according means agreeing with, and necessarily includes the idea of two things, or two persons. We cannot say, *The Gospel written by Matthew according to Matthew;* but we might say, the Gospel of some other person, according to what was reported to have been the opinion of Matthew. Now we do not know who those other persons were, nor whether what they wrote accorded with anything that Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John might have said. There is too little evidence, and too much contrivance about those books to merit credit.

The next book after those called Gospels, is that called the Acts of the Apostles. This book is anonymous; neither do the councils *that* compiled or contrived the New Testament, *tell us how they came* by it. The church, to supply this de-

fect, say it was written by Luke, which shows that the church and its priests have not compared that called the Gospel according to St. Luke, and the Acts together, for the two contradict each other. The book of Luke, chap. 24, makes Jesus ascend into heaven the very same day that it makes him rise from the grave. The book of Acts, chap. i. v. 3, says, that he remained on the earth forty days after his crucifixion. There is no believing what either of them says.

The next to the book of Acts is that entitled "The Epistle of Paul the Apostle* to the Romans." This is not an epistle, or letter, written by Paul, or signed by him. It is an epistle, or letter, written by a person who signs himself TERTIUS, and sent, as it is said at the end, by a servant woman called Phebe. The last chapter, v. 22, says, "I, Tertius, who wrote this Epistle, salute you." Who Tertius or Phebe were we know nothing of. The epistle is not dated. The whole of it is written in the first person, and that person is Tertius, not Paul. But it suited the church to ascribe it to Paul. There is nothing in it that is interesting, except it be to contending and wrangling sectaries. The stupid metaphor of the potter and the clay is in the 9th chapter.

The next book is entitled "The First Epistle of Paul the Apostle, to the Corinthians." This, like the former, is not an epistle written by Paul, nor signed by him. The conclusion of the epistle says, "The first epistle to the Corinthians was written from Philippi, by Stephanas, and Fortunatus, and Achaiacus, and Timotheus." The second epistle, entitled "The Second Epistle of Paul the Apostle, to the Corinthians," is in the same case with the first. The conclusion of it says, "It was written from Philippi, a city of Macedonia, by Titus and Lucas."

A question may arise upon these cases, which is, are these persons the writers of the epistles originally, or are they the writers and attestors of copies sent to the councils who compiled the code or canon of the New Testament? If the epistles

* According to the criterion of the church, Paul was not an apostle: that appellation being given only to those called the twelve. Two sailors belonging to a man of war, got into a dispute upon this point, *whether* Paul was an apostle or not, and they agreed to refer it to the *boatswain*, who decided very canonically that Paul was an *acting apostle* but not *rated*.

had been dated, this question could be decided; but in either of the cases the evidences of Paul's handwriting, and of their being written by him, is wanting, and therefore there is no authority for calling them Epistles of Paul. We know not whose epistles they were, nor whether they are genuine or forged.

The next is entitled "The Epistle of Paul the Apostle, to the Galatians." It contains six short chapters. But short as the epistle is, it does not carry the appearance of being the work or composition of one person. The fifth chapter, verse 2, says, "If ye be circumcised, Christ shall avail you nothing." It does not say circumcision shall profit you nothing, but Christ shall profit you nothing. Yet in the sixth chap. ver. 15, it says, "For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature." These are not reconcileable passages, nor can contrivance make them so. The conclusion of the epistle says, it was written from Rome, but it is not dated, nor is there any signature to it, neither do the compilers of the New Testament say how they came by it. We are in the dark upon all these matters.

The next is entitled "The Epistle of Paul the Apostle, to the Ephesians." Paul is not the writer. The conclusion of it says, "Written from Rome, unto the Ephesians, by Tychicus."

The next is entitled "The Epistle of Paul the Apostle, to the Philippians." Paul is not the writer. The conclusion of it says, "It was written to the Philippians from Rome, by Epaphroditus." It is not dated. Query, were those men who wrote and signed those epistles Journeymen Apostles, who undertook to write in Paul's name, as Paul is said to have preached in Christ's name?

The next is entitled "The Epistle of Paul the Apostle, to the Colossians." Paul is not the writer. Doctor Luke is spoken of in this Epistle as sending his compliments. "Luke, the beloved physican, and Demas, greet you." Chap. iv., v. 14. It does not say a word about his writing any Gospel. The conclusion of the Epistle says, "Written from Rome to the Colossians, by Tychicus and Onesimus."

The next is entitled "The first and the second Epistles of Paul the Apostle, to the Thessalonians." Either the writer of these Epistles was a visionary enthusiast, or a direct im-

postor, for he tells the Thessalonians, and, he says, he tells them by the word of the Lord, that the world will be at an end in his and their time; and after telling them that those who are already dead shall rise, he adds, chapter 4, v. 17, "Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up with them into the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we be ever with the Lord." Such detected lies as these ought to fill priests with confusion, when they preach such books to be the word of God. These two Epistles are said, in the conclusion of them, to be written from Athens. They are without date or signatures.

The next four Epistles are private letters. Two of them are to Timothy, one to Titus, and one to Philemon. Who they were, nobody knows.

The first to Timothy is said to be written from Laodicea. It is without date or signature. The second to Timothy is said to be written from Rome, and is without date or signature. The Epistle to Titus is said to be written from Nicopolis, in Macedonia. It is without date or signature. The Epistle to Philemon is said to be written from Rome, by Onesimus. It is without date.

The last Epistle ascribed to Paul is entitled "The Epistle of Paul the Apostle, to the Hebrews," and is said, in the conclusion, to be written from Italy, by Timothy. This Timothy (according to the conclusion of the Epistle called the second Epistle of Paul to Timothy) was bishop of the Church of the Ephesians, and consequently this is not an Epistle of Paul.

On what slender cobweb evidence do the priests and professors of the Christian religion hang their faith! The same degree of hearsay evidence, and that at third and fourth hand, would not, in a court of justice, give a man title to a cottage, and yet the priests of this profession presumptuously promise their deluded followers the kingdom of heaven. A little reflection would teach men that those books are not to be trusted to; that so far from there being any proof they are the word of God, it is unknown who the writers of them were, or at what time they were written, within three hundred years after the reputed authors are said to have lived. It is not the interest of priests, who get their living by them, to examine into the insufficiency of the evidence upon which those books were

received by the popish councils who compiled the New Testament.

The cry of the priests, that the Church is in danger, is the cry of men who do not understand the interest of their own craft, for instead of exciting alarms and apprehensions for its safety, as they expect, it excites suspicion that the foundation is not sound, and that it is necessary to take down and build it on a surer foundation. Nobody fears for the safety of a mountain, but a hillock of sand may be washed away! Blow then, O ye priests, "the Trumpet in Zion," for the Hillock is in danger.

DETECTOR—P.

COMMUNICATION.

THE church tells us that the books of the Old and New Testament are divine revelation, and without this revelation we could not have true ideas of God.

The Deist, on the contrary, says, that those books *are not* divine revelation, and that were it not for the light of reason, and the religion of Deism, those books, instead of teaching us true ideas of God, would teach us not only false but blasphemous ideas of him.

Deism teaches us that God is a God of truth and justice. Does the Bible teach the same doctrine? It does not.

The Bible says, (Jeremiah, chap. 20, verses 5, 7,) that God is a deceiver. "O Lord (says Jeremiah), thou hast deceived me, and I was deceived. Thou art stronger than I, and hast prevailed."

Jeremiah not only upbraids God with deceiving *him*, but in chap. 4, verse 9, he upbraids God with deceiving the people of Jerusalem. "Ah! Lord God, (says he,) surely thou hast greatly deceived this people and Jerusalem, saying, ye shall have peace, whereas the sword reacheth unto the soul."

In chap. 15, verse 8, the Bible becomes more impudent, and calls God, in plain language, a *liar*. "Wilt thou, (says Jeremiah to God,) be altogether unto me as a liar and as waters that fail?"

Ezekiel, chap. 14, verse 9, makes God to say—"If the prophet be deceived when he hath spoken a thing, *I the Lord have deceived that prophet.*" All this is downright blasphemy.

The prophet Micaiah, as he is called, 2 Chron. chap. 18, verse 18, tells another blasphemous story of God.—"I saw, says he, the Lord sitting on his throne, and all the hosts of heaven standing on his right hand and on his left. And the Lord said, who shall entice Ahab, king of Israel, to go up and *fall* at Ramoth Gilead? And one spoke after this manner, and another after that manner. Then there came out a spirit (Micaiah does not tell us where he came from) and *stood before the Lord*, (what an impudent fellow this spirit was), and said, I will entice him. And the Lord said unto him, wherewith? and he said, I will go out and be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets. And the Lord said, Thou shalt entice him, and thou shalt also prevail; go out and do even so."

We often hear of a gang of thieves plotting to rob and murder a man, and laying a plan to entice him out that they may execute their design, and we always feel shocked at the wickedness of such wretches; but what must we think of a book that describes the Almighty acting in the same manner, and laying plans in heaven to entrap and ruin mankind. Our ideas of his justice and goodness forbid us to believe such stories, and, therefore, we say that a lying spirit has been in the mouth of the writers of the books of the Bible.

T. P.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE PROSPECT.

In addition to the judicious remarks in your 12th number, on the absurd story of Noah's flood, in the 7th chapter of Genesis, I send you the following:

The second verse makes God to say unto Noah, "Of every *clean* beast thou shalt take to thee by sevens, the male and his *female*, and of every beast that are *not clean*, by two, the *male* and his female."

Now, there was no such thing as beasts *clean* and *unclean* in the time of Noah. Neither were there any such people as Jews or Israelites at that time, to whom that distinction was a law. The law, called the law of Moses, by which a distinction is made, beasts clean and unclean, was not until several hundred years after the time that Noah is said to have lived. The story, therefore, detects itself, because the inventor forgot himself, by making God make use of an expression that could not be used at the time. The blunder is of the same kind, as if a man in telling a story about America, a hundred years ago, should quote an expression from Mr. Jefferson's inaugural speech, as if spoken by him at that time.

My opinion of this story is the same as what a man once said to another, who asked him in a drawling tone of voice, "Do you believe the account about No-ah?" The other replied in the same tone of voice, *ah-no*. T. P.

RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.*

THE following publication, which has appeared in several newspapers in different parts of the United States, shows in the most striking manner, the character and effects of religious fanaticism, and to what extravagant lengths it will carry its unruly and destructive operations. We give it a place in the Prospect, because we think the perusal of it will be gratifying to our subscribers; and, because, by exposing the true character of such frantic zeal, we hope to produce some influence upon the reason of man, and induce him to rise superior to such dreadful illusions. The judi-

* It becomes necessary to insert Mr. Scott's letter, for the due understanding of the comments made upon it, by Mr. Paine. It has also in itself much interest, as exhibiting a true picture of the awful condition in which priestcraft has involved human nature, by inculcating "the doctrines of our fallen state by nature, and the way of recovering through Christ." A more childish and besotted dogma, I will venture to say, was never taught in the most barbarous nation that ever existed *in the* world.—EDITOR.

cious remarks at the end of this account were communicated to us by a very intelligent and faithful friend to the cause of Deism.

Extract from a Letter of the Rev. George Scott, of Mill Creek, Washington County, Pennsylvania, to Col. William McFarren, of Mount Bethel, Northampton County, Pa., dated November 3, 1802.

My Dear Friend,

We have wonderful times here. God has been pleased to visit this barren corner with abundance of his grace. The work began in a neighbouring congregation, at a sacramental occasion, about the last of September. It did not make its appearance in my congregation till the first Tuesday of October. After society in the night, there appeared an evident stir among the young people, but nothing of the appearance of what appeared afterwards. On Saturday evening following, we had society, but it was dull throughout. On Sabbath-day one cried out, but nothing else extraordinary appeared. That evening I went part of the way to the Raccoon congregation, when the sacrament of the supper was administered; but on Monday morning a very strong impression of duty constrained me to return to my congregation in the Flats, when the work was begun. We met in the afternoon at the meeting-house, where we had a warm society. In the evening we removed to a neighbouring house, where we continued in society till midnight; numbers were falling all the time of the society.—After the people were dismissed, a considerable number staid and sung hymns, till perhaps two o'clock in the morning, when the work began to the astonishment of all. Only five or six were left able to take care of the rest, to the number perhaps of near forty.—They fell in all directions, on benches, on beds, and on the floor. Next morning the people began to flock in from all quarters. One girl came early in the morning, but did not get within one hundred yards of the house, before she fell powerless, and was carried in. We could not leave the house, and, therefore, continued society all that day and all that night, and on Wednesday morning, I was obliged to leave a number of them on the spot. On Thursday evening we met again, when the work was amazing; about twenty

persons lay to all appearance dead for near two and a half hours, and a great number cried out with sore distress.—Friday, I preached at Mill Creek. Here nothing appeared more than an unusual solemnity. That evening we had society, where great numbers were brought under conviction, but none fell. On Sabbath-day I preached at Mill Creek. This day and evening was a very solemn time, but none fell. On Monday I went to attend presbytery, but returned on Thursday evening to the Flats, where society was appointed, when numbers were struck down. On Saturday evening we had society, and a very solemn time—about a dozen persons lay dead three and a half hours by the watch. On Sabbath a number fell, and we were obliged to continue all night in society, as we had done every evening we had met before. On Monday, a Mr. Hughes preached at Mill Creek, but nothing extraordinary appeared, only a great deal of falling. We concluded to divide that evening into two societies, in order to accommodate the people. Mr. H. attended the one and I the other. Nothing strange appeared where Mr. H. attended; but where I attended, God was present in the most wonderful manner. I believe there was not one present but was more or less affected. A considerable number fell powerless, and two or three, after lying some time, recovered with joy, and spoke near half an hour. One, especially, declared in a surprising manner the wonderful view she had of the person, character, and offices of Christ, with such accuracy of language, that I was astonished to hear it. Surely this must be the work of God! On Thursday evening we had a lively society, but not much falling down. On Saturday, we all went to the Cross Roads, and attended a sacrament. Here were, perhaps, about 4000 people collected. The weather was uncomfortable; on the Sabbath-day it rained, and on Monday it snowed. We had thirteen ministers present. The exercises began on Saturday, and continued on night and day with little or no intermission. Great numbers fell; to speak within bounds, there were upwards of 150 down at one time, and some of them continued three or four hours with but little appearance of life. Numbers came to, rejoicing, while others were deeply distressed.—The scene was wonderful; the cries of the distressed, and the agonizing groans, gave some faint representation of the awful cries and the bitter screams which will, no doubt, be extorted

from the damned in hell. But what is to me the most surprising, of those who have been subjects among my people with whom I have conversed, but three had any terrors of hell during their exercise. The principal cry is, O how long have I rejected Christ! O how often have I embrued my hands in his precious blood! O how often have I waded through his precious blood by stifling conviction! O this dreadful hard heart! O what a dreadful monster sin is! It was my sin that nailed Jesus to the cross, &c.

The preaching is various; some thunder the terrors of the law—others preach the mild invitation of the gospel. For my part, since the work began, I have confined myself chiefly to the doctrines of our fallen state by nature, and the way of recovery through Christ; opening the way of salvation: showing how God can be just and yet be the justifier of them that believe, and also the nature of true faith and repentance; pointing out the difference between true and false religion, and urging the invitations of the gospel in the most engaging manner that I am master of, without any strokes of terror. The convictions and cries appear to be, perhaps, nearly equal under all these different modes of preaching, but it appears rather most, when we preach on the fulness and freeness of salvation.

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REMARKS BY MR. PAINE.

In the fifth chapter of Mark, we read a strange story of the Devil getting into swine after he had been turned out of a man, and as the freaks of the Devil in *that* story and the tumble-down descriptions in *this* are very much alike, the two stories ought to go together.

"And they came over unto the other side of the sea, into the country of the Gadarenes. And when he was come out of the ship, immediately there met him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit, who had his dwelling among the tombs; and no man could bind him, no, not with chains: *because that* he had been often bound with fetters and chains, *and the chains* had been plucked asunder by him, and the fetters *broken* in pieces; neither could any man tame him. And

always night and day, he was in the mountains, and in the tombs, crying, and cutting himself with stones. But when he saw Jesus afar off, he ran and worshipped him, and cried with a loud voice, and said, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, *thou* son of the most high God? I adjure thee by God, that thou torment me not. (For he said unto him, Come out of the man, *thou* unclean spirit.) And he asked him, What *is* thy name? and he answered, saying, My name *is* Legion: for we are many. And he besought him much that he would not send them away out of the country. Now there was there, nigh unto the mountains, a great herd of swine feeding. And all the devils besought him, saying, Send us into the swine, that we may enter into them. And forthwith Jesus gave them leave. And the unclean spirits went out, and entered into the swine; and the herd ran down violently a steep place into the sea (they were about two thousand), and were choked in the sea."

The force of the imagination is capable of producing strange effects.—When animal magnetism began in France, which was while Doctor Franklin was minister to that country, the wonderful accounts given of the wonderful effects it produced on the persons who were under the operation, exceeded anything related in the foregoing letter from Washington County. They tumbled down, fell into trances, roared and rolled about like persons supposed to be bewitched. The government, in order to ascertain the fact, or detect the imposition, appointed a committee of physicians to inquire into the case, and Doctor Franklin was requested to accompany them, which he did.

The committee went into the operator's house, and the persons on whom an operation was to be performed, were assembled. They were placed in the position in which they had been when under former operations, and *blind-folded.* In a little time they began to show signs of agitation, and in the space of about two hours they went through all the frantic airs they had shown before; but the case was, that no operation was performing upon them, neither was the operator in the room, for he had been ordered out of it by the physicians; but as the persons did not know this, they supposed him present and operating upon them. It was the effect of imagination *only.* Doctor Franklin in relating this account to

writer of this article, said, that he thought the government might as well have let it gone on, for that as imagination sometimes produced disorders, it might also cure some. It is fortunate, however, that this falling down and crying out scene did not happen in New England a century ago, for if it had the preachers would have been hung for witchcraft, and in more ancient times the poor falling down folks would have been supposed to be possessed of a devil, like the man in Mark, among the tombs. The progress that reason and Deism make in the world, lessens the force of superstition, and abates the spirit of persecution.

END OF THE THEOLOGICAL WORKS.

THOMAS PAINE'S LETTERS TO WASHINGTON.

PARIS, *August* 3, 1796.

As censure is but awkwardly softened by apology, I shall offer you no apology for this letter. The eventful crisis, to which your double politics have conducted the affairs of your country, requires an investigation uncramped by ceremony.

There was a time when the fame of America, moral and political, stood fair and high in the world. The lustre of her revolution extended itself to every individual, and to be a citizen of America, gave a title to respect in Europe. Neither meanness nor ingratitude had been mingled in the composition of her character. Her resistance to the attempted tyranny of England left her unsuspected of the one, and her open acknowledgment of the aid she received from France precluded all suspicion of the other. The politics of Washington had not then appeared.

At the time I left America (April, 1787) the continental convention, that formed the federal constitution, was on the point of meeting. Since that time new schemes of politics, and new distinction of parties, have arisen. The term *anti-federalist* has been applied to all those who combated the defects of that constitution, or opposed the measures of your administration. It was only to the absolute necessity of establishing some federal authority, extending equally over all the states, that an instrument so inconsistent as the present federal constitution is, obtained a suffrage. I would have voted for it myself, had I been in America, or even for a worse,

rather than have had none; provided it contained the means of remedying its defects by the same appeal to the people, by which it was to be established. It is always better policy to leave removable errors to expose themselves, than to hazard too much in contending against them theoretically.

I have introduced these observations not only to mark the general difference between the anti-federalist and anti-constitutionalist, but to preclude the effect, and even the application, of the former of these terms to myself. I declare myself opposed to several matters in the constitution, particularly to the manner in which what is called the executive is formed, and to the long duration of the senate; and if I live to return to America, I will use all my endeavours to have them altered. I also declare myself opposed to almost the whole of your administration; for I know it to have been deceitful, if not perfidious, as I shall show in the course of this letter. But as to the point of consolidating the states into a federal government, it so happens that the proposition for that purpose came originally from myself. I proposed it in a letter to Chancellor Livingston in the spring of the year 1782, while that gentleman was minister for foreign affairs. The five per cent. duty recommended by Congress had then fallen through, having been adopted by some of the states, altered by others, rejected by Rhode Island, and repealed by Virginia, after it had been consented to. The proposal in the letter I allude to, was to get over the whole difficulty at once, by annexing a continental legislative body to Congress; for in order to have any law of the Union uniform, the case could only be, that either Congress as it then stood, must frame the law, and the states severally adopt it without alteration, or, the states must elect a continental legislature for the purpose. Chancellor Livingston, Robert Morris, Gouverneur Morris, and myself, had a meeting at the house of Robert Morris on the subject of that letter. There was no diversity of opinion on the proposition for a continental legislature: the only difficulty was on the manner of bringing the proposition forward. For my own part, as I considered it as a remedy in reserve, that could be applied at any time, *when the states saw themselves wrong enough to be put right* (which did not appear to be the case at that time), I did *not see* the propriety of urging it precipitately, and declined *being the* publisher of it myself. After this account of a

fact, the leaders of your party will scarcely have the hardiness to apply to me the term of anti-federalist. But I can go to a date and to a fact beyond this, for the proposition for electing a continental convention to form a continental government is one of the subjects treated of in the pamphlet "*Common Sense.*"

Having thus cleared away a little of the rubbish that might otherwise have lain in my way, I return to the point of time at which the present federal constitution and your administration began. It was very well said by an anonymous writer in Philadelphia, about a year before that period, that, "*thirteen staves and ne'er a hoop will not make a barrel;*" and as any kind of hooping the barrel, however defectively executed, would be better than none, it was scarcely possible but that considerable advantages must arise from the federal hooping of the states. It was with pleasure that every sincere friend to America beheld as the natural effect of union, her rising prosperity, and it was with grief they saw that prosperity mixed, even in the blossom, with the germ of corruption. Monopolies of every kind marked your administration almost in the moment of its commencement. The lands obtained by the revolution were lavished upon partisans; the interest of the disbanded soldier was sold to the speculator; injustice was acted under the pretence of faith; and the chief of the army became the patron of the fraud. From such a beginning what else could be expected, than what has happened? A mean and servile submission to the insults of one nation; treachery and ingratitude to another.

Some vices make their approach with such a splendid appearance, that we scarcely know to what class of moral distinctions they belong: they are rather virtues corrupted than vices originally. But meanness and ingratitude have nothing equivocal in their character. There is not a trait in them that renders them doubtful. They are so originally vice, that they are generated in the dung of other vices, and crawl into existence with the filth upon their back. The fugitives have found protection in you, and the levee-room is their place of rendezvous.

As the federal constitution is a copy, though not quite so base as the original, of the form of the British government, an imitation of its vices was naturally to be expected. So intimate is the connexion between *form* and practice that to adopt

the one is to invite the other. Imitation is naturally progressive, and is rapidly so in matters that are vicious.

Soon after the federal constitution arrived in England, I received a letter from a female literary correspondent (a native of New York) very well mixed with friendship, sentiment, and politics. In my answer to that letter, I permitted myself to ramble into the wilderness of imagination, and to anticipate what might hereafter be the condition of America. I had no idea that the picture I then drew was realizing so fast, and still less that Mr. Washington was hurrying it on. As the extract I allude to is congenial with the subject I am upon, I here transcribe it:—

"You touch me on a very tender point when you say that my friends on your side of the water cannot be reconciled to the idea of my abandoning America even for my native England. They are right. I had rather see my horse, Button, eating the grass of Bordentown, or Morrisania, than see all the pomp and show of Europe.

"A thousand years hence, for I must indulge a few thoughts, perhaps in less, America may be what England now is. The innocence of her character, that won the hearts of all nations in her favour, may sound like a romance, and her inimitable virtue as if it had never been. The ruins of that liberty, which thousands bled to obtain, may just furnish materials for a village tale, or extort a sigh from rustic sensibility; while the fashionable of that day, enveloped in dissipation, shall deride the principle, and deny the fact!

"When we contemplate the fall of empires, and the extinction of the nations of the ancient world, we see but little more to excite our regret than the mouldering ruins of pompous palaces, magnificent monuments, lofty pyramids, and walls and towers of the most costly workmanship: but when the empire of America shall fall, the subject of contemplated sorrow will be infinitely greater than crumbling brass or marble can inspire. It will not then be said, Here stood a temple of vast antiquity, here rose a Babel of invisible height, or there a palace of sumptuous magnificence; but here, ah, painful thought! the noblest work of human wisdom, the greatest scene of human glory, the fair cause of freedom, rose and fell: read this, and then ask if I forget America!"

Impressed as I was, with apprehension of this kind, I had

America constantly in my mind in all the publications I afterward made. The first, and still more, the second part of the "Rights of Man," bear evident marks of this watchfulness; and the dissertations on first principles of government goes more directly to the point than either of the former. I now pass on to the other subjects.

It will be supposed by those into whose hands this letter may fall, that I have some personal resentment against you: and I will therefore settle this point before I proceed farther.

If I have any resentment, you must acknowledge that I have not been hasty in declaring it, neither would it now be declared (for what are private resentments to the public) if the cause of it did not unite itself as well with your public as with your private character, and with the motives of your political conduct.

The part I acted in the American revolution is well known. I shall not here repeat it. I know also, that had it not been for the aid received from France, in men, money, and ships, your cold and unmilitary conduct (as I shall show in the course of this letter) would in all possibility have lost America; at least she would not have been the independent nation she now is. You slept away your time in the field, till the finances of the country were completely exhausted, and you have but little share in the glory of the final event. It is time, sir, to speak the undisguised language of historical truth.

Elevated to the chair of the presidency, you assumed the merit of everything to yourself; and the natural ingratitude of your constitution began to appear. You commenced your presidential career by encouraging and swallowing the grossest adulation; and you travelled America from one end to the other to put yourself in the way of receiving it. You have as many addresses in your chest as James II. As to what were your views, for if you are not great enough to have ambition, you are little enough to have vanity, they cannot be directly inferred from expressions of your own; but the partisans of your politics have divulged the secret.

John Adams has said (and John it is known was always a speller after places and offices, and never thought his little services were highly enough paid)—John has said, that as Mr. Washington had no child, the presidency should be made hereditary in the family of Lund Washington. John might

then have counted upon some sinecure for himself, and a provision for his descendants. He did not go so far as to say also, that the vice-presidency should be hereditary in the family of John Adams. He prudently left that to stand upon the ground that one good turn deserves another.*

John Adams is one of those men who never contemplated the origin of government, or comprehended anything of first principles. If he had, he might have seen, that the right to set up and establish hereditary government never did, and never can, exist in any generation at any time whatever; that it is of the nature of treason, because it is an attempt to take away the rights of all the minors living at that time, and of all succeeding generations. It is of a degree beyond common treason; it is a sin against nature. The equal rights of generations is a right fixed in the nature of things; it belongs to the son when of age, as it belonged to the father before him. John Adams would himself deny the right that any former deceased generation could have to decree authoritatively a succession of governors over him or over his children, and yet he assumes a pretended right, treasonable as it is, of acting it himself. His ignorance is his best excuse.

John Jay has said (and this John was always the sycophant of everything in power, from Mr. Girard in America, to Grenville in England)—John Jay has said, that the senate should have been appointed for life. He would then have been sure of never wanting a lucrative appointment for himself, and have had no fears about impeachment. These are the disguised traitors that call themselves federalists.†

Could I have known to what degree of corruption and perfidy the administrative part of the government of America had descended, I could have been at no loss to have understood the reservedness of Mr. Washington toward me during my imprisonment in the Luxembourg. There are cases in which silence is a loud language. I will here explain the cause of that imprisonment, and return to Mr. Washington afterward.

* Two persons to whom John Adams said this, told me of it. The *secretary* of Mr. Jay was present when it was told to me.

† *If* Mr. John Jay desires to know on what authority I say this, I *will give that* authority publicly when he chooses to call for it.

In the course of that rage, terror, and suspicion, which the brutal letter of the Duke of Brunswick first started into existence in France, it happened that almost every man who was opposed to violence, or who was not violent himself, became suspected. I had constantly been opposed to everything which was of the nature, or of the appearance of violence; but as I had always done it in a manner that showed it to be a principle founded in my heart, and not a political manœuvre, it precluded the pretence of accusing me. I was reached however under another pretence.

A decree was passed to imprison all persons born in England; but as I was a member of the convention, and had been complimented with the honorary style of citizen of France, as Mr. Washington and some other Americans have been, this decree fell short of reaching me. A motion was afterward made and carried, supported chiefly by Bourdon de l'Oise, for expelling foreigners from the convention. My expulsion being thus effected, the two committees of public safety and of general surety, of which Robespierre was the dictator, put me in arrestation under the former decree for imprisoning persons born in England. Having thus shown under what pretence the imprisonment was effected, I come to speak of such parts of the case as apply between me and Mr. Washington, either as a president, or as an individual.

I have always considered that a foreigner, such as I was in fact, with respect to France, might be a member of a convention for framing a constitution, without affecting his right of citizenship, in the country to which he belongs, but not a member of a government after a constitution is formed; and I have uniformly acted upon this distinction. To be a member of a government requires a person being in allegiance with that government and to the country locally. But a constitution, being a thing of principle, and not of action, and which after it is formed, is to be referred to the people for their approbation or rejection, does not require allegiance in the persons forming and proposing it; and beside this, it is only to the thing after it is formed and established, and to the country after its governmental character is fixed by the adoption of a constitution, that the allegiance can be given. No oath of allegiance or of citizenship was required of the members who composed the convention: there was nothing exist-

ing in form to swear allegiance to. If any such condition had been required, I could not, as a citizen of America in fact, though citizen of France by compliment, have accepted a seat in the convention.

As my citizenship in America was not altered or diminished by anything I had done in Europe (on the contrary, it ought to have been considered as strengthened, for it was the American principle of government that I was endeavouring to spread in Europe), and as it is the duty of every government to charge itself with the care of any of its citizens who may happen to fall under an arbitrary persecution abroad, and this is also one of the reasons for which ambassadors or ministers are appointed, it was the duty of the executive department in America to have made, at least some inquiries about me, as soon as it heard of my imprisonment. But if this had not been the case, that government owed it to me on every ground of honour and gratitude. Mr. Washington owed it to me on every score of private acquaintance, I will not now say friendship; for it has some time been known by those who know him, that he has no friendships, that he is incapable of forming any; he can serve or desert a man, or a cause, with constitutional indifference; and it is this cold hermaphrodite faculty that imposed itself upon the world, and was credited a while by enemies, as by friends, for prudence, moderation, and impartiality.

Soon after I was put into arrestation and imprisoned in the Luxembourg, the Americans who were then in Paris, went in a body to the bar of the convention to reclaim me. They were answered by the then president Vadier, who has since absconded, that *I was born in England*, and it was signified to them, by some of the committee of general surety, to whom they were referred (I have been told it was Billaud Varennes), that their reclamation of me was only the act of individuals, without any authority from the American government.

A few days after this, all communication between persons imprisoned, and any person without the prison, was cut off by an order of the police. I neither saw nor heard from any person for six months; and the only hope that remained to me was, that a new minister would arrive from America to supersede Morris, and that he would be authorized to inquire into the cause of my imprisonment; but even this hope, in

the state to which matters were daily arriving, was too remote to have any consolatory effect, and I contented myself with the thought that I might be remembered when it would be too late. There is perhaps no condition from which a man, conscious of his own uprightness, cannot derive consolation; for it is in itself a consolation for him to find, that he can bear that condition with calmness and fortitude.

From about the middle of March (1794) to the fall of Robespierre, July 29 (9th of Thermidor), the state of things in the prisons was a continued scene of horror. No man could count upon life for twenty hours. To such a pitch of rage and suspicion were Robespierre and his committee arrived, that it seemed as if they feared to leave a man to live. Scarcely a night passed in which ten, twenty, thirty, forty, fifty, or more, were not taken out of the prison, carried before a pretended tribunal in the morning, and guillotined before night. One hundred and sixty-nine were taken out of the Luxembourg one night, in the month of July, and one hundred and sixty of them guillotined. A list of two hundred more, according to the report in the prison, was preparing a few days before Robespierre fell. In this last list I have good reason to believe I was included. A memorandum in the handwriting of Robespierre was afterward produced in the convention, by the committee to whom the papers of Robespierre were referred, in these words:—

"Demander que Thomas Paine soit decreté d'accusation pour l'interet de l'Amerique, autant que de la France."*

I had been imprisoned seven months, and the silence of the executive part of the government of America (Mr. Washington) upon the case, and upon everything respecting me, was explanation enough to Robespierre that he might proceed to extremities.

A violent fever which had nearly terminated my existence, was, I believe, the circumstance that preserved it. I was not in a condition to be removed, or to know of what was passing, or of what had passed, for more than a month. It makes a blank in my remembrance of life. The first thing I was informed of was the fall of Robespierre.

About a week after this, Mr. Monroe arrived to supersede

* "Demand that Thomas Paine be decreed of accusation for the interest of America, as well as of France."

Gouverneur Morris, and as soon as I was able to write a note legible enough to be read, I found a way to convey one to him by means of the man who lighted the lamps in the prison; and whose unabated friendship to me, from whom he had never received any service, and with difficulty accepted any recompense, puts the character of Mr. Washington to shame.

In a few days I received a message from Mr. Monroe, conveyed to me in a note from an intermediate person, with assurance of his friendship, and expressing the desire that I would rest the case in his hands. After a fortnight or more had passed, and hearing nothing farther, I wrote to a friend who was then in Paris, a citizen of Philadelphia, requesting him to inform me what was the true situation of things with respect to me. I was sure that something was the matter; I began to have hard thoughts of Mr. Washington, but I was unwilling to encourage them.

In about ten days I received an answer to my letter, in which the writer says, "Mr. Monroe has told me that he has no order (meaning from the president, Mr. Washington) respecting you, but that he (Mr. Monroe) will do everything in his power to liberate you; but, from what I learn from the Americans lately arrived in Paris, you are not considered, either by the American government, or by individuals, as an American citizen."

I was now at no loss to understand Mr. Washington and his new-fangled faction, and that the policy was silently to leave me to fall in France. They were rushing as fast as they could venture, without awakening the jealousy of America, into all the vices and corruptions of the British government; and it was no more consistent with the policy of Mr. Washington, and those who immediately surrounded him, than it was with that of Robespierre or of Pitt, that I should survive.—They have, however, missed the mark, and the reaction is upon themselves.

Upon the receipt of the letter just alluded to, I sent a memorial to Mr. Monroe, which the reader will find in the appendix, and I received from him the following answer. It is dated the 18th of September, but did not come to hand till *about the* 18th of October. I was then falling into a relapse, *the weather* was becoming damp and cold, fuel was not to be *had, and* the abscess in my side, the consequence of those

things, and of want of air and exercise, was beginning to form, and has continued immoveable ever since. Here follows Mr. Monroe's letter.

"*Paris, September* 18, 1794.

"DEAR SIR: I was favoured, soon after my arrival here, with several letters from you, and more latterly with one in the character of a memorial upon the subject of your confinement: and should have answered them at the times they were respectively written, had I not concluded, you would have calculated with certainty upon the deep interest I take in your welfare, and the pleasure with which I shall embrace every opportunity in my power to serve you. I should still pursue the same course, and for reasons which must obviously occur, if I did not find that you are disquieted with apprehensions upon interesting points, and which justice to you and our country equally forbid you should entertain. You mention that you have been informed you are not considered as an American citizen by the Americans, and that you have likewise heard that I had no instructions respecting you by the government. I doubt not the person who gave you the information meant well, but I suspect he did not even convey accurately his own ideas on the first point: for I presume the most he could say is, that you had likewise become a French citizen, and which by no means deprives you of being an American one. Even this, however, may be doubted, I mean the acquisition of citizenship in France, and I confess you have said much to show that it has not been made. I really suspect that this was all that the gentleman who wrote to you, and those Americans he heard speak upon the subject, meant. It becomes my duty, however, to declare to you, that I consider you as an American citizen, and that you are considered universally in that character by the people of America. As such you are entitled to my attention; and so far as it can be given consistently with those obligations which are mutual between every government and even transient passenger, you shall receive it.

"The Congress have never decided upon the subject of citizenship, in a manner to regard the present case. By being with us through the revolution, you are of our country as absolutely as if you had been born there, and you are no more of *England than* every native American is. This is the true

doctrine in the present case, so far as it becomes complicated with any other consideration. I have mentioned it to make you easy upon the only point which could give you any disquietude.

"It is necessary for me to tell you, how much all your countrymen—I speak of the great mass of the people—are interested in your welfare. They have not forgotten the history of their own revolution, and the difficult scenes through which they passed; nor do they review its several stages without reviving in their bosoms a due sensibility of the merits of those who served them in that great and arduous conflict. The crime of ingratitude has not yet stained, and I trust never will stain, our national character. You are considered by them, as not only having rendered important services in our own revolution, but as being, on a more extensive scale, the friend of human rights, and a distinguished and able advocate in favour of public liberty. To the welfare of Thomas Paine, the Americans are not, nor can they be, indifferent.

"Of the sense which the President has always entertained of your merits, and of his friendly disposition toward you, you are too well assured, to require any declaration of it from me. That I forward his wishes in seeking your safety is what I well know: and this will form an additional obligation on me to perform what I should otherwise consider as a duty.

"You are in my opinion, at present, menaced by no kind of danger. To liberate you will be an object of my endeavours, and as soon as possible. But you must, until that event shall be accomplished, bear your situation with patience and fortitude; you will likewise have the justice to recollect, that I am placed here upon a difficult theatre, many important objects to attend to, and with few to consult. It becomes me in pursuit of those, to regulate my conduct with respect to each, as to the manner and the time, as will, in my judgment, be best calculated to accomplish the whole.

"With great esteem and respect consider me personally your friend. "JAMES MONROE."

The part of Mr. Monroe's letter, in which he speaks of the *President* (Mr. Washington), is put in soft language. Mr. *Monroe* knew what Mr. Washington had said formerly, and

he was willing to keep that in view. But the fact is, not only that Mr. Washington had given no orders to Mr. Monroe, as the letter stated; but he did not so much as say to him, "Inquire if Mr. Paine be dead or alive, in prison or out, or see if there be any assistance we can give him."

While these matters were passing, the liberations from the prisons were numerous; from twenty to forty in the course of almost every twenty-four hours. The continuance of my imprisonment after a new minister had arrived immediately from America, which was now more than two months, was a matter so obviously strange, that I found the character of the American government spoken of in very unqualified terms of reproach; not only by those who still remained in prison, but by those who were liberated, and by persons who had access to the prison from without. Under these circumstances, I wrote again to Mr. Monroe, and found occasion to say, among other things, "It will not add to the popularity of Mr. Washington, to have it believed in America, as it is believed here —that he connives at my imprisonment."

The case, so far as it respected Mr. Monroe, was, that having to get over the difficulties which the strange conduct of Gouverneur Morris had put in the way of a successor, and having no authority from the American government, to speak officially upon anything relating to me, he found himself obliged to proceed by unofficial means with individual members; for though Robespierre was overthrown, the Robespierrean members of the committee of public safety still remained in considerable force, and had they found out that Mr. Monroe had no official authority upon the case, they would have paid little or no regard to his reclamation of me. In the meantime, my health was suffering exceedingly, the dreary prospect of winter was coming on; and imprisonment was still a thing of danger. After the Robespierrean members of the committee were removed, by the expiration of their time of serving, Mr. Monroe reclaimed me, and I was liberated the 4th of November. Mr. Monroe arrived in Paris the beginning of August before. All that period of my imprisonment, at least, I owe not to Robespierre, but to his colleague in projects, George Washington. Immediately upon my liberation, Mr. Monroe invited me to his house, where I remained more than *a year and a half;* and I speak of his aid and friendship, as

an open-hearted man will always do in such a case, w
respect and gratitude.

Soon after my liberation the convention passed a unanim
vote, to invite me to return to my seat among them.
times were still unsettled and dangerous, as well from with
as within, for the coalition was unbroken, and the constitut
not settled. I chose, however, to accept the invitation; fo
I undertake nothing but what I believe to be right, I aban
nothing that I undertake; and I was willing also to sh
that, as I was not of a cast of mind to be deterred by p
pects or retrospects of danger, so neither were my princi
to be weakened by misfortune or perverted by disgust.

Being now once more abroad in the world, I began to
that I was not the only one who had conceived an unfavour
opinion of Mr. Washington; it was evident that his chara
was on the decline as well among Americans as among
eigners of different nations. From being the chief of
government, he had made himself the chief of a party;
his integrity was questioned, for his politics had a doub
appearance. The mission of Mr. Jay to London, notw
standing there was an American minister there already,
then taken place, and was beginning to be talked of. It
peared to others, as it did to me, to be enveloped in myst
which every day served either to increase or to explain
matter of suspicion.

In the year 1790, or about that time, Mr. Washington
president, had sent Gouverneur Morris to London, as his
cret agent, to have some communication with the Bri
ministry. To cover the agency of Morris it was given ou
know not by whom, that he went as an agent from Rol
Morris to borrow money in Europe, and the report was
mitted to pass uncontradicted. The event of Mr. Morr
negotiation was, that Mr. Hammond was sent minister f
England to America, Pinckney from America to England,
himself minister to France. If, while Morris was ministe
France, he was not an emissary of the British ministry
the coalesced powers, he gave strong reason to be suspec
of it. No one who saw his conduct, and heard his conve
tion, could doubt his being in their interest; and had he
got off at the time he did, after his recall, he would have b
in arrestation. Some letters of his had fallen into the h

of the committee of public safety, and inquiry was making after him.

A great bustle had been made by Mr. Washington about the conduct of Genet in America, while that of his own minister, Morris, in France, was infinitely more reproachable. If Genet was imprudent or rash, he was not treacherous; but Morris was all three. He was the enemy of the French revolution, in every stage of it. But notwithstanding this conduct on the part of Morris and the known profligacy of his character, Mr. Washington, in a letter he wrote to him at the time of recalling him on the complaint and request of the committee of public safety, assures him, that though he had complied with that request, he still retained the same esteem and friendship for him as before. This letter Morris was foolish enough to tell of; and, as his own character and conduct were notorious, the telling of it could have but one effect, which was that of implicating the character of the writer. Morris still loiters in Europe, chiefly in England; and Mr. Washington is still in correspondence with him. Mr. Washington ought, therefore, to expect, especially since his conduct in the affair of Jay's treaty, that France must consider Morris and Washington as men of the same description. The chief difference, however, between the two is (for in politics there is none), that the one is profligate enough to profess an indifference about moral principles, and the other is prudent enough to conceal the want of them.

About three months after I was at liberty, the official note of Jay to Grenville on the subject of the capture of American vessels by British cruisers, appeared in the American papers that arrived at Paris. Everything was of a piece—everything was mean. The same kind of character went to all circumstances public or private. Disgusted at this national degradation, as well as at the particular conduct of Mr. Washington to me, I wrote to him (Mr. Washington) on the 22d of February, 1795, under cover to the then secretary of state (Mr. Randolph), and intrusted the letter to M. Letombe, who was appointed French consul to Philadelphia, and was on the point of taking his departure. When I supposed M. Letombe had sailed, I mentioned the letter to Mr. Monroe, and as I was then in his house, I showed it to him. He expressed a wish that I *would recall it*, which he supposed might be done, as he

stowed another letter on Mr. Washington, which I sen
cover to Mr. Franklin Bache of Philadelphia. The le
as follows :—

"TO GEORGE WASHINGTON, PRESIDENT OF THE U
STATES.

"PARIS, *Sept.* 20,

"SIR: I had written you a letter by M. Letombe,
consul, but, at the request of Mr. Monroe, I withdrew
the letter is still by me. I was the more easily prevail
to do this, as it was then my intention to have retu
America the latter end of the present year; but the
now suffer prevents me. In case I had come, I shou
applied to you for such parts of your official letters (a
private ones, if you had chosen to give them), as c
any instructions or directions either to Mr. Monroe, o
Morris, or to any other person, respecting me; for a
were informed of my imprisonment in France, it was
bent on you to have made some inquiry into the cause
might very well conclude that I had not the opportu
informing you of it. I cannot understand your silen
this subject upon any other ground than as connivanc

cause for putting America in the case, but by interpreting the silence of the American government into connivance and consent. I was imprisoned on the ground of being born in England; and your silence in not inquiring the cause of that imprisonment, and reclaiming me against it, was tacitly giving me up. I ought not to have suspected you of treachery; but whether I recover from the illness I now suffer or not, I shall continue to think you treacherous, till you give me cause to think otherwise. I am sure you would have found yourself more at your ease, had you acted by me as you ought; for whether your desertion of me was intended to gratify the English government, or to let me fall into destruction in France, that you might exclaim the louder against the French revolution; or whether you hoped by my extinction to meet with less opposition in mounting up the American government; either of these will involve you in reproach you will not easily shake off. "THOMAS PAINE."

The withdrawn Letter alluded to in the above.

"TO GEORGE WASHINGTON, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES.

"PARIS, *Feb.* 22, 1795.

"SIR: As it is always painful to reproach those one would wish to respect, it is not without some difficulty I have taken the resolution to write to you. The danger to which I have been exposed cannot have been unknown to you, and the guarded silence you have observed upon that circumstance is what I ought not to have expected from you, either as a friend or as President of the United States.

"You knew enough of my character to be assured that I could not have deserved imprisonment in France; and without knowing anything more than this, you had sufficient ground to have taken some interest for my safety. Every motive arising from recollection ought to have suggested to you the consistency of such a measure. But I cannot find that you have so much as directed any inquiry to be made whether I was in prison or at liberty, dead or alive; what the cause of that imprisonment was, or whether there was any service or assistance you could render. Is this what I ought to have expected from America, after the part I have acted

toward her? Or will it redound to her honour or yours, that I tell the story? I do not hesitate to say, that you have not served America with more fidelity, or greater zeal, or more disinterestedness than myself, and perhaps not with better effect. After the revolution of America had been established, you rested at home to partake its advantages, and I ventured into new scenes of difficulty to extend the principles which that revolution had produced. In the progress of events, you beheld yourself a President in America, and me a prisoner in France; you folded your arms, forgot your friend, and became silent.

"As everything I have been doing in Europe was connected with my wishes for the prosperity of America, I ought to be the more surprised at this conduct on the part of her government. It leaves me but one mode of explanation, which is, *that everything is not as it ought to be among you*, and that the presence of a man who might disapprove, and who had credit enough with the country to be heard and believed, was not wished for. This was the operating motive with the despotic faction that imprisoned me in France (though the pretence was that I was a foreigner), and those that have been silent and inactive toward me in America, appear to me to have acted from the same motive. It is impossible for me to discover any other.

"After the part I have taken in the revolution of America, it is natural that I feel interested in whatever relates to her character and prosperity. Though I am not on the spot to see what is immediately acting there, I see some part of what she is acting in Europe. For your own sake, as well as for that of America, I was both surprised and concerned at the appointment of Gouverneur Morris to be minister to France. His conduct has proved that the opinion I had formed of that appointment was well founded. I wrote that opinion to Mr. Jefferson at the time, and I was frank enough to say the same thing to Morris, that *it was an unfortunate appointment*. His prating, insignificant pomposity rendered him at once offensive, suspected, and ridiculous; and his total neglect of all business had so disgusted the Americans, that they proposed *drawing* up a protest against him. He carried this neglect to *such an* extreme, that it was necessary to inform him of it; *and I asked* him one day, *if* he did not feel himself ashamed

to take the money of the country and do nothing for it; but Morris is so fond of profit and voluptuousness, that he cares nothing about character. Had he not been removed at the time he was, I think his conduct would have precipitated the two countries into a rupture; and in this case, hated *systematically* as America is, and ever will be, by the British government, and at the same time suspected by France, the commerce of America would have fallen a prey to both.

"If the inconsistent conduct of Morris exposed the interest of America to some hazard in France, the pusillanimous conduct of Mr. Jay in England has rendered the American government contemptible in Europe. Is it possible that any man, who has contributed to the independence of America, and to free her from the tyranny and injustice of the British government, can read without shame and indignation the note of Jay to Grenville? It is a satire upon the declaration of independence, and an encouragement to the British government to treat America with contempt. At the time this minister of petitions was acting this miserable part, he had every means in his hands to enable him to have done his business as he ought. The success or failure of his mission depended upon the success or failure of the French arms. Had France failed, Mr. Jay might have put his humble petition in his pocket and gone home. The case happened to be otherwise, and he has sacrificed the honour, and perhaps the advantage of it, by turning petitioner. I take it for granted, that he was sent over to demand indemnification for the captured property; and, in this case, if he thought he wanted a preamble to his demand, he might have said, that, 'though the government of England might suppose itself under the necessity of seizing American property bound to France, yet that supposed necessity could not preclude indemnification to the proprietors, who, acting under the authority of their own government, were not accountable to any other.' But Mr. Jay sets out with an implied recognition of the right of the British government to seize and condemn; for he enters his complaint against the *irregularity* of the seizures, and the condemnation, as if they were reprehensible only by not being conformable to the terms of the proclamation under which they were seized. Instead of being the envoy of a government, he goes over like a lawyer to demand *a new trial.* I can hardly help thinking but that Gren-

ville wrote that note himself, and Jay signed it; for the style of it is domestic and not diplomatic. The term *his majesty*, used without any descriptive epithet, always signifies the king whom the minister represents. If this sinking of the demand into a petition was a juggle between Grenville and Jay to cover the indemnification, I think it will end in another juggle, that of never paying the money; and he made use of afterward to preclude the right of demanding it: for Mr. Jay has virtually disowned the right by appealing to the *magnanimity of his majesty against the capturers.* He has made this magnanimous majesty umpire in the case, and the government of the United States must abide by the decision. If, sir, I turn some part of this business into ridicule, it is to avoid the unpleasant sensation of serious indignation.

"Among other things which I confess I do not understand, is your proclamation of neutrality.—This has always appeared to me as an assumption on the part of the executive. But passing this over as a disputable case, and considering it only as political, the consequence has been that of sustaining the losses of war, without the balance of reprisals. When the profession of neutrality, on the part of America, was answered by hostilities on the part of Britain, the object and intention of that neutrality existed no longer; and to maintain it after this, was not only to encourage farther insults and depredations, but was an informal breach of neutrality toward France, by passively contributing to the aid of her enemy. That the government of England considered the American government as pusillanimous, is evident from the increasing insolence of the conduct of the former toward the latter, till the affair of General Wayne. She then saw that it might be possible to kick a government into some degree of spirit. So far as the proclamation of neutrality was intended to prevent a dissolute spirit of privateering in America under foreign colours, it was undoubtedly laudable; but to continue it as a government neutrality, after the commerce of America was made war upon, was submission, and not neutrality.—I have heard so much about this thing called neutrality, that I know not if the ungenerous and dishonourable silence (for I must call it such) that has been observed by your part of the government toward me during my imprisonment, has not in some measure arisen from that policy.

"Though I have written you this letter, you ought not to suppose it has been an agreeable undertaking to me. On the contrary, I assure you it has cost me some disquietude. I am sorry you have given me cause to do it; for, as I have always remembered your former friendship with pleasure, I suffer a loss by your depriving me of that sentiment.

"THOMAS PAINE."

That this letter was not written in very good temper, is very evident; but it was just such a letter as his conduct appeared to me to merit, and everything on his part since has served to confirm that opinion. Had I wanted a commentary on his silence, with respect to my imprisonment in France, some of his faction have furnished me with it. What I here allude to, is a publication in a Philadelphia paper, copied afterward into a New York paper, both under the patronage of the Washington faction, in which the writer, still supposing me in prison in France, wonders at my lengthy respite from the scaffold. And he marks his politics still farther, by saying: "It appears, moreover, that the people of England did not relish his [Thomas Paine's] opinions quite as well as he expected; and that for one of his last pieces, as destructive to the peace and happiness of their country (meaning, I suppose, the '*Rights of man*'), they threatened our knight-errant with such serious vengeance that, to avoid a trip to Botany Bay, he fled over to France as a less dangerous voyage."

I am not refuting or contradicting the falsehood of this publication, for it is sufficiently notorious, neither am I censuring the writer, on the contrary, I thank him for the explanation he has incautiously given of the principles of the Washington faction. Insignificant, however, as the piece is, it was capable of having some ill effects, had it arrived in France during my imprisonment, and in the time of Robespierre; and I am uncharitable in supposing that this was one of the intentions of the writer.*

I have now done with Mr. Washington on the score of pri-

* I know not who the writer of this piece is, but some late Americans say it is Phineas Bond, an American refugee, and now a British consul; and that he writes under the signature of Peter Skunk, or Peter Porcupine (Cobbett), or some such signature.

vate affairs. It would have been far more agreeable to me, had his conduct been such as not to have merited these reproaches. Errors or caprices of temper can be pardoned and forgotten; but a cold deliberate crime of the heart, such as Mr. Washington is capable of acting, is not to be washed away. —I now proceed to other matter.

After Jay's note to Grenville arrived in Paris from America, the character of everything that was to follow might be easily foreseen; and it was upon this anticipation that my letter of February the twenty-second was founded. The event has proved that I was not mistaken, except that it had been much worse than I expected.

It would naturally occur to Mr. Washington, that the secrecy of Jay's mission to England, where there was already an American minister, could not but create some suspicion in the French government, especially as the conduct of Morris had been notorious, and the intimacy of Mr. Washington with Morris was known.

The character which Mr. Washington has attempted to act in the world, is a sort of non-describable chameleon-coloured thing called prudence. It is, in many cases, a substitute for principle, and is so nearly allied to hypocrisy, that it easily slides into it. His genius for prudence furnished him, in this instance, with an expedient that served (as is the natural and general character of all expedients) to diminish the embarrassment of the moment, and multiply them afterward; for he caused it to be announced to the French government as a confidential matter (Mr. Washington should recollect that I was a member of the convention, and had the means of knowing what I here state)—he caused it, I say, to be announced, and that for the purpose of preventing any uneasiness to the French, on the score of Mr. Jay's mission to England, that the object of that mission, and Mr. Jay's authority, were restricted to the demanding of the surrender of the western posts, and indemnification for the cargoes captured in American vessels. —Mr. Washington knows that this was untrue; and knowing this, he had good reason, to himself, for refusing to furnish the house of representatives with copies of the instructions given to Jay, as he might suspect, among other things, that he should be also called upon for copies of instructions given to other ministers, and that in the contradiction of instructions

hi want of integrity would be detected. Mr. Washington may now perhaps learn, when it is too late to be of any use to him, that a man will pass better through the world with a thousand open errors upon his back, than in being detected in one sly falsehood. When one is detected, a thousand more are suspected.

The first account that arrived in Paris of a treaty being negotiated by Mr Jay (for nobody suspected any) came in an English newspaper, which announced that a treaty, *offensive* and *defensive*, had been concluded, between the United States of America and England. This was immediately denied by every American in Paris, as an impossible thing; and though it was disbelieved by the French, it imprinted a suspicion that some underhand business was going forward. At last the treaty itself arrived, and every well-affected American blushed with shame.

It is curious to observe how the appearances of characters will change, while the root that produces them remains the same. The Washington faction having waded through the slough of negotiation, and while it amused France with professions of friendship contrived to injure her, immediately throws off the hypocrite and assumes the swaggering air of a bravado. The party papers of that imbecile administration were on this occasion filled with paragraphs about sovereignty. A poltron may boast of his sovereign right to let another kick him, and this is the only kind of sovereignty shown in the treaty with England. But those dashing paragraphs, as Timothy Pickering well knows, were intended for France, without whose assistance, in men, money, and ships, Mr. Washington would have cut but a poor figure in the American war. But of his military talents I shall speak hereafter.

I mean not to enter into any discussion of any article of Jay's treaty; I shall speak only upon the whole of it. It is attempted to be justified on the ground of its not being a violation of any article or articles of the treaty pre-existing with France. But the sovereign right of explanation does not lie with George Washington and his man Timothy; France, on her part, has, at least, an equal right: and when nations dispute, it is not so much about words as about things.

A man, such as the world calls a sharper, as versed as Jay *must be supposed* to be in the quibbles of the law, may find

a way to enter into engagements, and make bargains, in such a manner as to cheat some other party, without that party being able, as the phrase is, *to take the law of him*. This often happens in the cabalistical circle of what is called law. But when this is attempted to be acted on the national scale of treaties, it is too despicable to be defended, or to be permitted to exist. Yet this is the trick upon which Jay's treaty is founded, so far as it has relation to the treaty pre-existing with France. It is a counter-treaty to that treaty, and perverts all the great articles of that treaty to the injury of France, and makes them operate as a bounty to England, with whom France is at war. The Washington administration shows great desire that the treaty between France and the United States be preserved. Nobody can doubt its sincerity upon this matter. There is not a British minister, a British merchant, or a British agent or factor, in America, that does not anxiously wish the same thing. The treaty with France serves now as a passport to supply England with naval stores, and other articles of American produce; while the same articles, when coming to France, are made contraband, or seizable, by Jay's treaty with England. The treaty with France says, that neutral ships make neutral property, and thereby gives protection to English property on board American ships; and Jay's treaty delivers up French property on board American ships to be seized by the English. It is too paltry to talk of faith, of national honour, and of the preservation of treaties, while such a barefaced treachery as this stares the world in the face.

The Washington administration may save itself the trouble of proving to the French government its *most faithful* intentions of preserving the treaty with France; for France has now no desire that it should be preserved; she had nominated an envoy extraordinary to America, to make Mr. Washington and his government a present of the treaty, and to have no more to do with *that* or with *him*. It was at the same time officially declared to the American minister at Paris, *that the French republic had rather have the American government for an open enemy than a treacherous friend*. This, sir, together with the internal distractions caused in America, and the loss of character in the world, is the eventful crisis alluded to in the beginning of this letter, to which your double politics

have brought the affairs of your country. It is time that the eyes of America be opened upon you.

How France could have conducted herself toward America, and American commerce, after all treaty stipulations had ceased, and under the sense of services rendered, and injuries received, I know not. It is, however, an unpleasant reflection, that in all national quarrels, the innocent, and even the friendly part of the community, become involved with the culpable and the unfriendly; and as the accounts that arrived from America continued to manifest an invariable attachment, in the general mass of the people, to their original ally, in opposition to the new-fangled Washington faction, the revolutions that had been taken in France were suspended. It happened also, fortunately enough, that Gouverneur Morris was not minister at this time.

There is, however, one point that yet remains in embryo, and which, among other things, serves to show the ignorance of the Washington treaty-makers, and their inattention to pre-existing treaties, when they were employing themselves in framing or ratifying the new treaty with England.

The second article of the treaty of commerce between the United States and France says: "The most Christian king and the United States engage mutually not to grant any particular favour to any other nations, in respect to commerce and navigation, that shall not immediately become common to the other party, who shall enjoy the same favour freely, if the concession was freely made, or on allowing the same compensation if the concession was conditional."

All the concessions, therefore, made to England by Jay's treaty are, through the medium of this second article in the pre-existing treaty, made to France, and become engrafted into the treaty with France, and can be exercised by her as a matter of right, the same as by England.

Jay's treaty makes a concession to England, and that unconditionally, of seizing naval stores in American ships, and condemning them as contraband. It makes also a concession to England to seize provisions and *other articles* in American ships. *Other articles*, are *all other articles;* and none but an ignoramus, or something worse, would have put such a phrase into a treaty. The condition annexed to this case is, that the *provisions and other* articles so seized are to be paid for at a

Mr. Pinckney, when he passed through France in his
Spain, spoke of the recommencement of the seizures as
that would take place. The French government had b
means received information from London to the sam
pose, with the addition that the recommencement of t
ures would cause no misunderstanding between the
and American governments. Grenville, in defending h
against the opposition in Parliament, on account of the s
of corn, said (see his speech at the opening of the Parl
that met October 29, 1795), that *the supplies for the Q*
expedition were furnished out of the American ships,
the accounts received at that time from England stat
those seizures were made under the treaty. After the s
for the Quiberon expedition had been procured, and
pected success had failed, the seizures were counterm
and had the French seized provision vessels going to E
it is probable that the Quiberon expedition could no
been attempted.

In one point of view, the treaty with England operat
loan to the English government. It gives permission
government to take American property at sea, to any a
and pay for it when it suits her; and, beside this, the
is in every point of view a surrender of the rights of A

treaty which a treaty can give. But so much has that treaty been perverted, that the liberality of it on the part of France has served to encourage Jay to form a counter-treaty with England; for he must have supposed the hands of France tied up by her treaty with America, when he was making such large concessions in favour of England. The injury which Mr. Washington's administration has done to the character, as well as to the commerce of America, is too great to be repaired by him. Foreign nations will be shy of making treaties with a government that has given the faithless example of perverting the liberality of a former treaty to the injury of the party with whom it was made.

In what fraudulent light must Mr. Washington's character appear in the world, when his declarations and his conduct are compared together! Here follows the letter he wrote to the committee of public safety, while Jay was negotiating in profound secrecy this treacherous treaty:—

"George Washington, President of the United States of America, to the representatives of the French people, members of the committee of public safety of the French republic, *the great and good friend and ally of the United States.*

"On the intimation of the wish of the French republic that a new minister should be sent from the United States, I resolved to manifest my sense of the readiness with which *my* request was fulfilled (that of recalling Genet), by immediately fulfilling the request of your government (that of recalling Morris.)

"It was some time before a character could be obtained worthy of the high office of expressing the attachment of the United States to the happiness of our allies, *and drawing closer the bonds of our friendship.* I have now made choice of James Monroe, one of our distinguished citizens, to reside near the French republic, in quality of minister plenipotentiary of the United States of America. He is instructed to bear to you our *sincere solicitude for your welfare, and to cultivate with zeal the cordiality so happily subsisting between us.* From a knowledge of his fidelity, probity, and good conduct, I have entire confidence that he will render himself acceptable unto you, and give effect to your desire of preserving and advancing *on all occasions the interests* and connexion of the two nations.

I beseech you, therefore, to give full credence to whatever he shall say to you on the part of the United States, and most of all, when he shall assure you that your prosperity is an object of our affection. And I pray God to have the French republic in his holy keeping. G. WASHINGTON."

Was it by entering into a treaty with England to surrender French property on board American ships, to be seized by the English, while English property on board American ships was declared by the French treaty not to be seizable, *that the bonds of friendship between America and France were to be drawn closer?* Was it by declaring naval stores contraband when coming to France, while by the French treaty they were not contraband when going to England, that the *connexion between France and America was to be advanced?* Was it by opening the American ports to the British navy in the present war, from which ports that same navy had been expelled by the aid solicited from France in the American war (and that aid gratuitously given), that the gratitude of America was to be shown, and the solicitude spoken of in the letter demonstrated?

As the letter was addressed to the committee of public safety, Mr. Washington did not expect it would get abroad in the world, or be seen by any other eye than of Robespierre, or be heard by any other ear than that of the committee; that it would pass as a whisper across the Atlantic from one dark chamber to the other, and there terminate. It was calculated to remove from the mind of the committee all suspicion upon Jay's mission to England, and in this point of view it was suited to the circumstances of the moment then passing; but as the event of that mission has proved the letter to be hypocritical, it serves no other purpose of the present moment than to show that the writer is not to be credited. Two circumstances served to make the reading of the letter necessary in the convention; the one was, that they who succeeded on the fall of Robespierre, found it most proper to act with publicity; the other, to extinguish the suspicions which the strange conduct of Morris had occasioned in France.

When the British treaty and the ratification of it by Mr. Washington were known in France, all farther declarations from him of his good disposition, as an ally and a friend,

passed for so many ciphers; but still it appeared necessary to keep up the farce of declarations. It is stipulated in the British treaty, that commissioners are to report, at the end of two years, on the case of *neutral ships making neutral property*. In the meantime, neutral ships do not make neutral property according to the British treaty, and they do according to the French treaty. The preservation therefore of the French treaty became of great importance to England, as by that means she can employ American ships as carriers, while the same advantage is denied to France. Whether the French treaty could exist as a matter of right after this clandestine perversion of it, could not but give some apprehensions to the partisans of the British treaty, and it became necessary to them to make up by fine words that was wanting in good actions.

An opportunity offered to that purpose. The convention, on the public reception of Mr. Monroe, ordered the American flag and the French flag to be displayed unitedly in the hall of the convention. Mr. Monroe made a present of an American flag for the purpose. The convention returned this compliment, by sending a French flag to America, to be presented by their minister, Mr. Adet, to the American government. This resolution passed long before Jay's treaty was known or suspected: it passed in the days of confidence;—but the flag was not presented by Mr. Adet till several months after the treaty had been ratified. Mr. Washington made this the occasion of saying some fine things to the French minister; and the better to get himself into the tune to do this, he began by saying the finest things of himself.

"Born, sir," said he, "in a land of liberty; *having* learned its value; *having* engaged in a perilous conflict to defend it; *having*, in a word, devoted the best years of my life to secure its permanent establishment in my own country; *my* anxious recollections, *my* sympathetic feelings, and *my* best wishes, are irresistibly excited, whenever, in any country, I see an oppressed people unfurl the banner of freedom."—Mr. Washington having expended so many fine phrases upon himself, was obliged to invent a new one for the French, and he calls them "wonderful people!"—The coalesced powers acknowledge as much.

It is laughable to hear Mr. Washington talk of his sym-

thetic feelings, who has always been remarked, even among his friends, for not having any. He has, however, given no proof of any to me. As to the pompous encomiums he so liberally pays to himself on the score of the American revolution, the propriety of them may be questioned; and, since he has forced them so much into notice, it is fair to examine his pretensions.

A stranger might be led to suppose, from the egotism with which Mr. Washington speaks, that himself, and himself only, had generated, conducted, completed, and established, the revolution. In fine, that it was all his own doing.

In the first place, as to the political part, he had no share in it; and therefore the whole of *that* is out of the question with respect to him. There remains, then, only the military part; and it would have been prudent in Mr. Washington not to have awakened inquiry upon that subject. Fame then was cheap; he enjoyed it cheaply; and nobody was disposed to take away the laurels that, whether they were *acquired* or not, had been given.

Mr. Washington's merit consisted in constancy. But constancy was the common virtue of the revolution. Who was there that was inconstant? I know but of one military defection, that of Arnold; and I know of no political defection, among those who made themselves eminent when the revolution was formed by the declaration of independence. Even Silas Deane, though he attempted to defraud, did not betray.

But when we speak of military character, something more is to be understood than constancy; and something more *ought* to be understood than the Fabian system of *doing nothing*. The *nothing* part can be done by anybody. Old Mrs. Thompson, the housekeeper of headquarters (who threatened to make the sun and the *wind* shine through Rivington of New York), could have done it as well as Mr. Washington. Deborah would have been as good as Barak.

Mr. Washington had the national rank of commander-in-chief, but he was not so in fact. He had, in reality, only a separate command. He had no control over, or direction of, the army to the northward under Gates, that captured Burgoyne; or of that to the south under Greene, that recovered the southern states. The nominal rank, however, of commander-in-chief, served to throw upon him the lustre of those

actions, and to make him appear as the soul and centre of all military operations in America.

He commenced his command June, 1775, during the time the Massachusetts army lay before Boston, and after the affair of Bunker's Hill. The commencement of his command was the commencement of inactivity. Nothing was afterward done or attempted to be done, during the nine months he remained before Boston. If we may judge from the resistance made at Concord, and afterward at Bunker's Hill, there was a spirit of enterprise at that time, which the presence of Mr. Washington chilled into cold defence. By the advantage of a good exterior he attacts respect, which his habitual silence tends to preserve; but he has not the talent of inspiring ardour in an army. The enemy removed from Boston to Halifax in March, 1776, to wait for reinforcements from Europe, and to take a more advantageous position at New York.

The inactivity of the campaign of 1775, on the part of General Washington, when the enemy had a less force than in any other future period of the war, and the injudicious choice of positions taken by him in the campaign of 1776, when the enemy had its greatest force, necessarily produced the losses and misfortunes that marked that gloomy campaign. The positions taken were either islands or necks of land. In the former, the enemy, by the aid of their ships, could bring their whole force against General Washington, as in the affair of Long Island; and in the latter, he might be shut up as in the bottom of a bag. This had nearly been the case at New York, and it was so in part: it was actually the case at Fort Washington; and it would have been the case at Fort Lee if General Greene had not moved precipitately off, leaving everything behind, and by gaining Hackensack bridge, got out of the bag of Bergen Neck. How far, Mr. Washington, as general, is blameable for these matters, I am not undertaking to determine; but they are evidently defects in military geography. The successful skirmishes at the close of that campaign (matters that would scarcely be noticed in a better state of affairs) make the brilliant exploits of General Washington's seven campaigns. No wonder we see so much pusillanimity in the *president*, when we see so little enterprise in the *general!*

The campaign of 1777 became famous, not by anything on the *part of* General Washington, but by the capture of General

Burgoyne and the army under his command, by the northern army at Saratoga, under General Gates. So totally distinct and unconnected were the two armies of Washington and Gates, and so independent was the latter of the authority of the nominal commander-in-chief, that the two generals did not so much as correspond, and it was only by a letter of General (since Governor) Clinton, that General Washington was informed of that event. The British took possession of Philadelphia this year, which they evacuated the next, just time enough to save their heavy baggage and fleet of transports from capture by the French Admiral d'Estaing, who arrived at the mouth of the Delaware soon after.

The capture of Burgoyne gave an eclat in Europe to the American arms, and facilitated the alliance with France. The eclat, however, was not kept up by anything on the part of General Washington. The same unfortunate languor that marked his entrance into the field, continued always. Discontent began to prevail strongly against him, and a party was formed in Congress while sitting at Yorktown in Pennsylvania, for removing him from the command of the army. The hope, however, of better times, the news of the alliance with France, and the unwillingness of showing discontent, dissipated the matter.

Nothing was done in the campaigns of 1778, 1779, 1780, in the part where General Washington commanded, except the taking Stony Point by General Wayne. The southern states in the meantime were overrun by the enemy. They were afterwards recovered by General Greene, who had in a very great measure created the army that accomplished that recovery. In all this General Washington had no share. The Fabian system of war followed by him, began now to unfold itself with all its evils; for what is Fabian war without Fabian means to support it? The finances of Congress, depending wholly on emissions of paper money, were exhausted. Its credit was gone. The continental treasury was not able to pay the expense of a brigade of wagons to transport the necessary stores to the army, and yet the sole object, the establishment of the revolution, was a thing of remote distance. The *time I am* now speaking of is in the latter end of the year *1780.*

In this situation of things it was found not only expedient,

but absolutely necessary, for Congress to state the whole case to its ally. I know more of this matter (before it came into Congress, or was known to General Washington), of its progress, and its issue, than I choose to state in this letter. Colonel John Laurens was sent to France as an envoy extraordinary on this occasion, and by a private agreement between him and me I accompanied him. We sailed from Boston in the Alliance frigate, February eleventh, 1781. France had already done much in accepting and paying bills drawn by Congress; she was now called upon to do more. The event of Colonel Laurens' mission, with the aid of the venerable minister Franklin, was, that France gave in money, as a present, six millions of livres, and ten millions more as a loan, and agreed to send a fleet of not less than thirty sail-of-the-line, at her own expense, as an aid to America. Colonel Laurens and myself returned from Brest the first of June following, taking with us two millions and a half of livres (upwards of one hundred thousand pounds sterling), of the money given, and convoying two ships with stores.

We arrived at Boston the twenty-fifth of August following. De Grasse arrived with the French fleet in the Chesapeake at the same time, and was afterward joined by that of Barras, making thirty-one sail-of-the-line. The money was transported in wagons from Boston to the Bank of Philadelphia, of which Mr. Thomas Willing, who has since put himself at the head of the list of petitioners in favour of the British treaty, was then president. And it was by the aid of this money, of this fleet, and of Rochambeau's army, that Cornwallis was taken; the laurels of which have been unjustly given to Mr. Washington. His merit in that affair was no more than that of any other American officer.

I have had, and still have, as much pride in the American revolution as any man, or as Mr. Washington has a right to have; but that pride has never made me forgetful whence the great aid came that completed the business. Foreign aid (that of France) was calculated upon at the commencement of the revolution. It is one of the subjects treated of in the pamphlet "Common Sense," but as a matter that could not be hoped for, useless independence was declared. The aid however was greater than could have been expected.

It is as well the ingratitude as the pusillanimity of Mr.

Washington and the Washington faction, that has brought upon America the loss of character she now suffers in the world, and the numerous evils her commerce has undergone, and to which it is still exposed. The British ministry soon found out what sort of men they had to deal with, and they dealt with them accordingly; and if farther explanation was wanting, it has been fully given since, in the snivelling address of the New York chamber of commerce to the president, and in that of sundry merchants of Philadelphia, which was not much better.

When the revolution of America was finally established by the termination of the war, the world gave her credit for great character; and she had nothing to do but to stand firm upon that ground. The British ministry had their hands too full of trouble to have provoked a rupture with her, had she shown a proper resolution to defend her rights: but encouraged as they were, by the submissive character of the American administration, they proceeded from insult to insult, till none more were left to be offered. The proposals made by Sweden and Denmark to the American government were disregarded. I know not if so much as an answer has been returned to them. The minister *penitentiary* (as some of the British prints called him), Mr. Jay, was sent on a pilgrimage to London, to make all up by penance and petition. In the mean time, the lengthy and drowsy writer of the pieces signed *Camillus* held himself in reserve to vindicate *everything;* and to sound in America the tocsin of terror upon the inexhaustible resources of England. Her resources, says he, are greater than those of all the other powers. This man is so intoxicated with fear and finance, that he knows not the difference between *plus* and *minus*—between a hundred pounds in hands and a hundred pounds worse than nothing.

The commerce of America, so far as it had been established, by all the treaties thad had been formed prior to that by Jay, was free, and the principles upon which it was established were good. That ground ought never to have been departed from. It was the justifiable ground of right: and no temporary difficulties ought to have induced an abandonment of it. The case is now otherwise. The ground, the scene, the pretensions, the everything, is changed. The commerce of America is by Jay's treaty put under foreign dominion. The

sea is not free for her. Her right to navigate it is reduced to the right of escaping; that is, until some ship of England or France stops her vessels, and carries them into port. Every article of American produce, whether from the sea or the land, fish, flesh, vegetable, or manufacture, is by Jay's treaty made either contraband or seizable. Nothing is exempt. In all other treaties of commerce the article which enumerates the contraband articles, such as firearms, gunpowder, &c., is followed by another which enumerates the articles not contraband: but it is not so in Jay's treaty. There is no exempting article. Its place is supplied by the article for seizing and carrying into port; and the sweeping phrase of provisions and *other articles* includes everything. There never was such a base and servile treaty of surrender, since treaties began to exist.

This is the ground upon which America now stands. All her rights of commerce and navigation are to begin anew, and that with loss of character to begin with.—If there is sense enough left in the heart, to call a blush into the cheek, the Washington administration must be ashamed to appear.—And as to you, sir, treacherous in private friendship (for so you have been to me, and that in the day of danger) and a hypocrite in public life, the world will be troubled to decide whether you are an APOSTATE, or an IMPOSTOR—Whether you have abandoned good principles, or whether you ever had any.

THOMAS PAINE.

END OF VOL. I.

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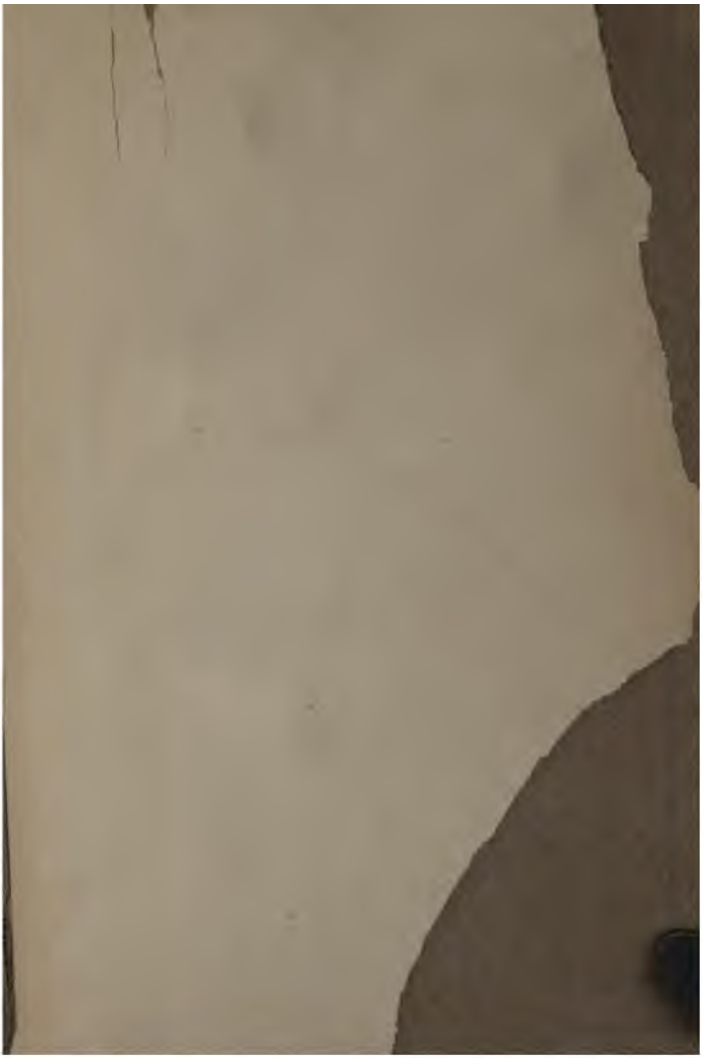
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